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THE MAGAZINE OF CREATIVE LIVING
Volume 158, Number 9

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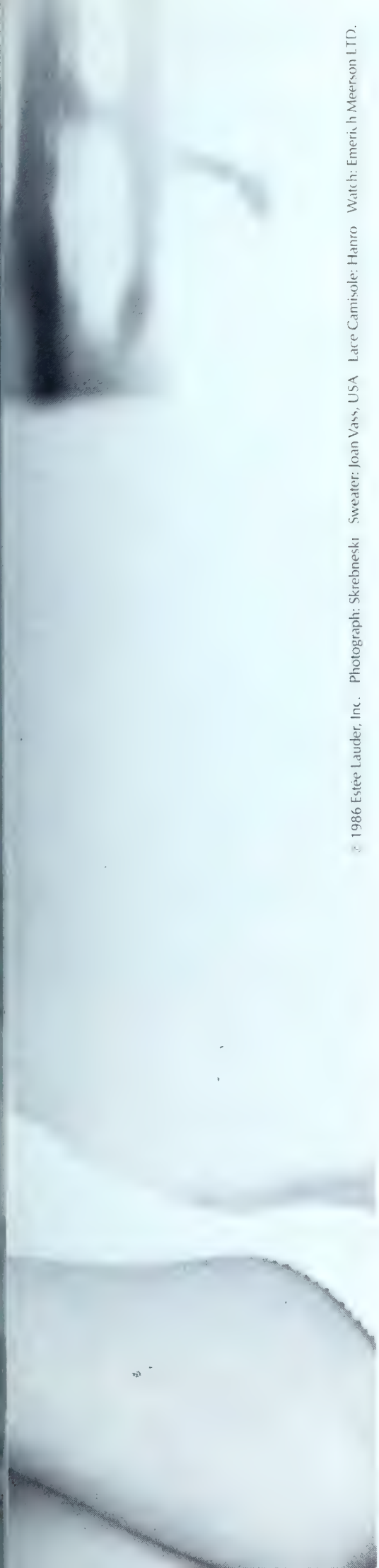
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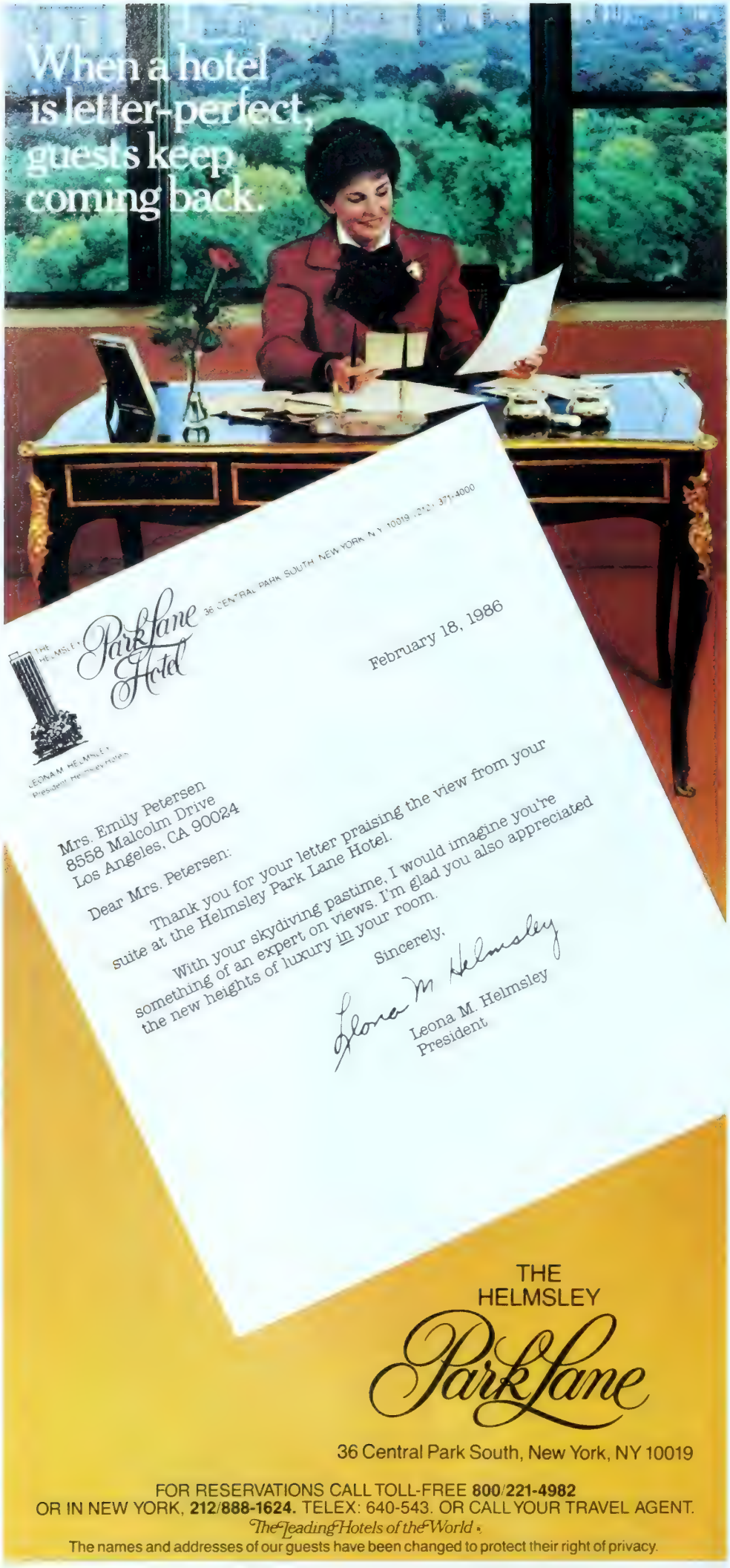
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Picasso and his son Paulo in the garden at Villa Beauregard, 1922; a sketch of the garden in Dinard by the artist.

When Harry Evans, then editor-in-chief of the Atlantic Monthly Press, called to offer us the exclusive rights to the interior, architecture, and garden sketches from the soon-to-be-published *Je Suis le Cahier: The Sketchbooks of Picasso,* we knew we had the perfect end-of-summer art story. Design director Lloyd Ziff and consulting editor John Richardson went immediately to the Pace Gallery in New York, where the sketches were on view, to select the images for our cover story, beginning on page 130. The Picasso show left Pace in August and was shipped to the Royal Academy in London, where it will be on view from September 12 to November 15. It will then return to the United States for a multicity show, thanks to American Express.

The only problem my mother has in planning her annual summer visits to New York is deciding which of her favorite flowers or berries she is willing to miss in her garden. Working in our garden on her last visit, she was telling us of her plan, at 75, to put a few more trees in her backyard in Michigan. I thought of her when Pauline Boardman, whose house and garden we show on page 194, told writer William Rayner that "perhaps the most unselfish act one can perform is to plant trees that grow to [a] colossal size when you know you will never see them in all their grandeur, but of which your children or grandchildren or somebody will become the beneficiaries."

Perhaps this is one of the reasons the landscape designer Roberto Burle Marx is so well loved in his native Brazil. Somewhat less well known here, the name Burle Marx was familiar even to the cab drivers editor Denise Otis encountered during her sojourn in Brazil to develop the profile in this issue. The subject of that profile has just been commissioned to create the master plan for the new 123-acre site of the Kentucky Botanical Gardens as well as the interiors of the tropical conservatory there and the galleries for specific plant collections.

He will collaborate with Philadelphia landscape architect Conrad Hamerman and with the architect—yet to be chosen—who will design the covering structures. Joan Carter, executive director of the Kentucky Botanical Gardens in Louisville, tells us she learned more in the thirty days she spent in Brazil working with Roberto Burle Marx than she had in two years of school. I felt a bit that way when reading Denise Otis's fine text, Artist of the Garden, page 166.

Knowing how many people in our field, both professional designers and those just interested in design, have made the trek to Italy solely to search out and enjoy houses by Palladio, I read the introduction to this month's travel piece, page 47, with some amusement. If Robert Adams's article on Andrea Palladio's rich legacy to Venice and the surrounding countryside makes you want to go and see for yourself, you may also want to take along Caroline Constant's *The Palladio Guide,* just published by Princeton Architectural Press. I know it's going to be in my bag when Jane and I head for Venice and Milan on our annual fall trek to Italy. Jane will get an opportunity to use the Italian she's been studying all year if we do go out into the countryside; as for me, I'll probably be speechless anyway.

Lou Gropp

Editor-in-Chief

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THE ART OF BOOK KEEPING

By Mark Hampton

The maddening but interesting thing about clichés is that they always contain a good bit of truth. Take the expression, "Books do furnish a room," which is even one of the titles in Anthony Powell's brilliant group of novels called *A Dance to the Music of Time*. There is no doubt about the accuracy of the observation, although it is repugnant to many people to place books in the category of decorative accessory: "What are these books *doing* here if they are neither read nor cared about?" they ask. For the purpose of our discussion about libraries and bookcases let us presume that books are vital and that everyone either (a) loves having them around or (b) would be better off if they did. And let us presume that we are not talking about books that are bought by the yard.

There are several libraries that I have loved from photographs for many, many years. A few in particular have become all-time favorites and can, I hope, bear being described again. I say *again* because they have been published over and over, but they are still fascinating. One that I hope to see some day is in the little hermitage built for Madame de Pompadour, that most interesting consumer and lady of fashion. For many years "The Pompadour," as it is called, was occupied by the late Vicomte and Vicomtesse de Noailles, two people who must be ensconced in the Pantheon of great brains, taste, and style. The library of this perfect eighteenth-century pavilion is a rather small space, almost cubelike because of its great height. The bookcases go straight to the floor, continuing down behind the tables and the backs of the chairs. The books themselves become the surface of the walls, and the background this surface creates is a wonderful foil for the funny combination of furnishings in the room—Régence chairs, Louis XV chairs, Louis XVI chairs, a big Chinese table, and a neoclassical Aubusson carpet. It is somehow an ideal room, due in no small part to the inviting atmosphere the books create.



This agreeable kind of bookcase ranges from 45 to 60 inches in height and can have a variety of corner pilasters.

Also in France, but a made-up architectural tour de force like so many of his decorating triumphs, is the library at Groussay, Charles de Beistegui's Valhalla of interior decoration near Versailles. It is a two-story room that has been photographed about as many times as the Statue of Liberty. (I am lucky enough to have an original Cecil Beaton photograph of the room with old seersucker slipcovers on the chairs—what a treasure!) Across one end of this huge room is a U-shaped bank of full-height bookcases with a sort of minstrel's gallery at the top, reached by not one but two spiral staircases made of the same mahogany as the bookcases themselves. It is a fabulous room in every way, but all the grand pictures and furniture count for nothing compared with the bookcases.

The more I think about it, the more certain I am that book rooms are my favorite rooms of all. The libraries in the fine teens-through-thirties houses of Chicago architect David Adler were superb. The great Walpole scholar Mr. Wilmarth Lewis had, in Farmington, Connecticut, a library designed by Delano & Aldrich—that august firm whose unerring taste seemed to permeate everything they did—a library with bookcases coming out at a right angle to the wall and stopping several feet from the ceiling, admitting light from high windows. On top of these bookcases stood busts and great big Chinese vases—absolutely marvelous—and for furniture, there were some chintz sofas and some leather chairs. What could



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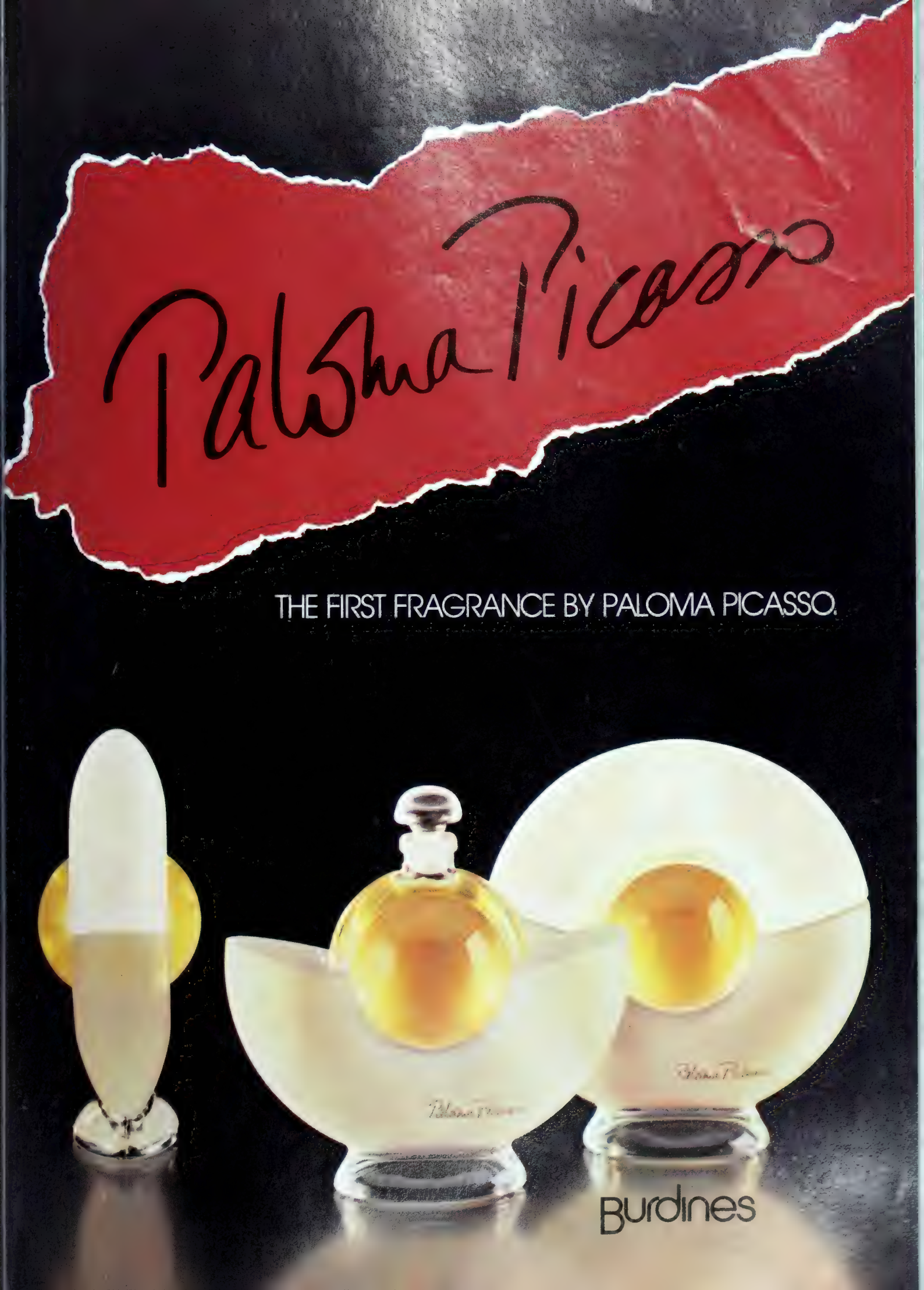
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be simpler? These, of course, are more or less real rooms in more or less real houses. In addition, and really staggering, are the *great* libraries.

The most beautiful one I have ever seen and maybe my favorite room on earth is the Imperial Court Library in the Hofburg in Vienna. Filling one whole side of the Josefplatz and about the size of Madison Square Garden, this indescribably beautiful space was designed by Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach, a gifted eighteenth-century architect who, like James Gibbs, studied under Carlo Fontana in Rome, and who, also like Gibbs, managed to assimilate a kind of baroque style that was applicable to the other layers of current taste. This resulted in an original and complicated architecture and decoration that never ceases to take one's breath away, and the Imperial Court Library is too beautiful for words. Without straining your patience, let me attempt to list at least the elements that make up this enormous and glorious space. There is a central dome, rising four or five stories above your head. There are flanking spaces with barrel vaults, connected to the rotunda by screens of Corinthian columns. The materials are warm marble and scagliola in shades of deep cream and terra cotta along with the mahogany, gilt bronze, and gold leaf of the bookcases and the brown morocco and gilt of the bindings. The ceilings are frescoed. But none of this comes close to describing the atmosphere of musty but almost celestial goldenness, of books integrated into a color scheme completely organized around the color and texture of the bindings themselves. The rich, earthy tonality surpasses any I have ever seen.

One aspect of many of these very tall libraries that is interesting to note is the presence of high windows above the tops of the bookcases. The shafts of sunlight filtering down into the somewhat gloomy, book-filled lower portion of the spaces are responsible for the marvelous atmosphere of light and shadow common to so many libraries. Our own stupendous public library in New York has reading rooms lit by high east and west windows, creating lovely light both in the morning and in the afternoon.

To strive to possess a monumental library is not, of course, what I am recommending. If you have a room in which you can build a lot of bookcases, you are very lucky. The design of a wall or more of new bookcases should, I believe, be simply but carefully integrated into the architectural vocabulary of the house you live in. Particular attention must be paid to cornice and base details. If you do not take the bookcases to the ceiling, then a deft approach to proportion becomes essential, since the interval of wall space above the books has to be large enough to put something on—pictures, sculpture, porcelain. The actual bays of shelves should be worked out in some rhythmic program based either on principles of symmetry or as a reflection of the windows, doors, and so forth on the wall opposite. I must also add that the bays of shelves should not be too long, because even the thickest of shelves will warp under the weight of too many books. Thin shelving is a disaster. There are also countless possibilities below the shelves for cabinets with doors. These cabinets can line up with the height of the windowsills, or they can relate to writing-table height—somewhere between 28 and 31 inches high. If this line gets too high, then the whole thing looks clumsy. High-waisted breakfront bookcases are not nearly so highly prized as low-waisted ones. If you need doors above as well, to hide guns or liquor or the dreaded television set, they can be paneled, or covered with grillwork, or they can have glass panes if protection is all that is required. I, by the way, love false bindings when they are subtly made, but lots of people shriek with disapproval when I suggest them. They are not difficult to have made, though, and the deception can be marvelous.

The easiest thing, however, is to put books in freestanding bookcases, which exist in an enormous variety of styles and finishes and which can be placed anywhere you want them. The most familiar sort of all is, I suppose, the mahogany breakfront bookcase with glass doors above and cabinets below. How or why it got lined with silk and turned into a china cupboard I'll never know. If you own one and have it in your dining room filled with porcelain, please forgive me, but they do look better filled with books. Secretary bookcases are both useful and beautiful, too, especially when the

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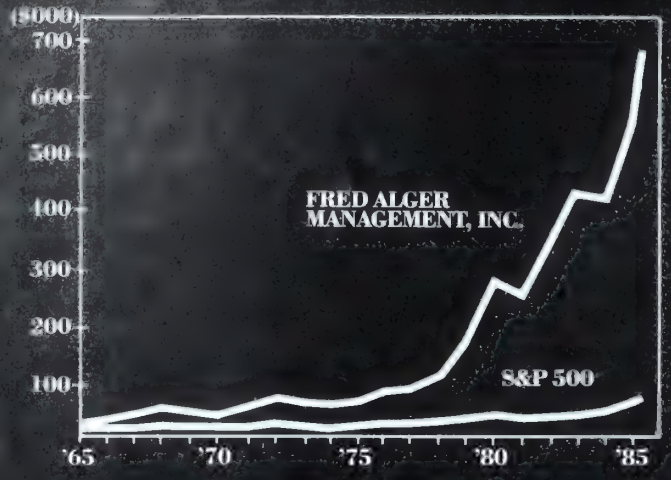
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writing part is open, displaying lovely inkwells and candlesticks and objects that fit into all the little cubbyholes. In addition, they hold a lot of books. We have one in our living room and it has about 120 books in it, all categorized and easy to locate. The ability to lay your hands on a particular book is sometimes very elusive.

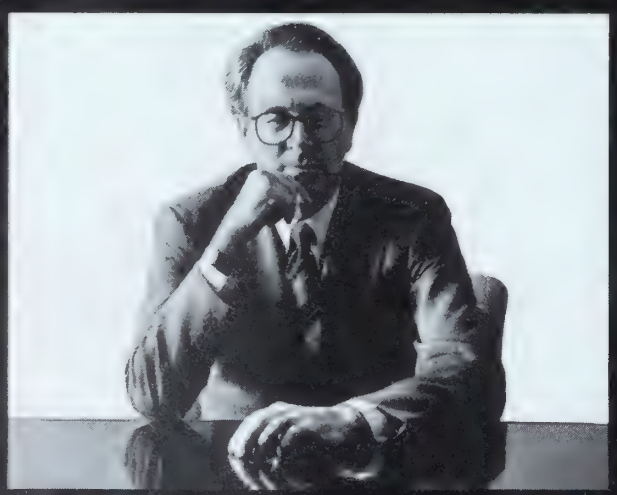
Another classic bookcase style that fits into an incredibly varied number of decorative styles is the Directoire brass-and-steel étagère, a version of which was made famous by Billy Baldwin in the Waldorf Towers apartment of Cole Porter. This wonderfully flexible design can have shelves of polished wood, lacquer, or glass. They can be any size, and if you order one so tall and skinny that it tips, you can always bolt it to the wall.

A large and rather neglected bookcase category (see illustration) ranges in height from 45 to 60 inches. If you can't find an antique example, a cabinetmaker or even a carpenter can make you one. Since it is freestanding, such a piece can have a base closely related to the baseboard molding of the room. But if that is too heavy, it can be more lightly scaled. The corner pilasters can also follow many different design paths. Scrolls, fluted columns, blocky columns with complicated bases, postmodern essays in neoclassicism—the list is quite long. Recently, I visited Olana, the beautiful Columbia County, New York, house of Frederic Church. In the hall are four lovely little oak bookcases, handsomely detailed by the artist himself with lots of deeply cut moldings. They are filled with books as they should be. On the tops are collections of exotic objects of the sort that fills this most exotic of houses, and that is the beauty of these bookcases. They are simple pieces of furniture that in addition to holding books support a wide variety of objects, photographs, or small works of art. They also provide a place for lamps, and regardless of what you put on them, those things will be at a height that makes them easy to look at, well above the often monotonous line of normal table heights. But the main thing is to get bookcases into your life and to fill your house with the most reliable companions imaginable. □

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NANTUCKET

The island's architectural heritage was saved by a fluke of economic history. Will its natural beauty survive as well?

By Frank Conroy





Far left: In Nantucket Town, a bower of roses over a gateway. *Left:* Snow edges the old Steamship Authority building, recently replaced. *Below left:* Autumn burnishes the moor at Quaise, along the Polpis Road. *Below right:* On Winter Street Gothick windows top a Greek Revival house.

It is way out there. Thirty miles out. A small, streamlined patch of low-lying land surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean. A geological surprise, as it were, dumped by ancient glaciers. If its neighbor, Martha's Vineyard, much bigger and closer to the mainland, seems to some Nantucketers not a proper island but simply an extension of the Cape, simply a part of "America" (as they still occasionally call it), it is because Nantucket is so much more intimately linked to the sea. Nantucket represents a delicate balance between the forces of the land and the forces of wind and water. It exists on the very edge of this possibility—moors, salt marshes, bogs, low pine woods, ponds, harbors, and small pockets of deciduous forest hidden in the lees of low hills. Nothing can grow here that cannot withstand salt spray or sea mist, but there is great variety on an intimate scale—rugosa, wild grape, blueberry, blackberry, Queen Anne's lace, Scotch broom, cranberry, bayberry, honeysuckle, fern, and heather abound. Give the sea just a bit more power and the entire fragile ecology would dissolve. Nantucket would reduce to rock and shifting sand, and melt into shoals. As it is, the coastline constantly changes—eroding here, building up there—in an endless tug of war. A windswept, elemental island, stripped of any lushness (except for the lushness of the small—for example, moss), it is a place of special, revealed beauty.

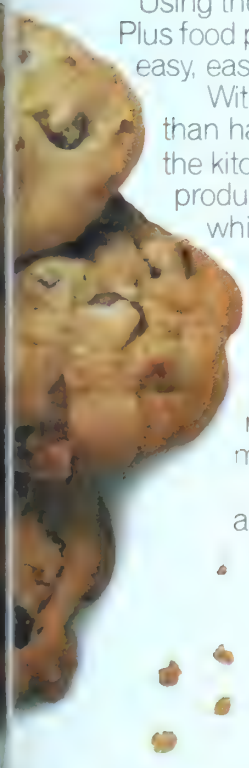




For me, Nantucket has been a kind of teacher for more than 25 years, helping my city-bred eyes to see in a new way. Countless times—walking in the salt marsh in October light, or finding my mooring in a spring fog, the shoreline twenty yards away and barely visible, like a ghost of a shoreline, or watching a cloud shadow race across the moors in high summer, or coming upon a hidden pond, frozen into black ice in February, its surface perfect as glass—countless times I have been

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stopped, struck dumb by the clear, unambiguous beauty before me. How can I explain this without embarrassing the reader? For some of us the whole island is like a vast, secular cathedral, an open cathedral celebrating nothing less than the enduring, nourishing beauty of the natural world. We love it not just because it is home but because it is more than we thought home could be. It's a Yankee island, of course, and Yankee reticence prevails. People do not run around gushing about the latest sunset in relation to Man, Nature, and God. "Nice evening," one islander might say to another. But there is a tacit understanding—it's a Nantucket evening, and therefore nice in a way off-islanders could not be expected to appreciate.

The town of Nantucket was the major port (along with New Bedford) for the whaling industry of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Melville describes it early on in *Moby Dick*—the clamor, the hustle and bustle centered around the docks and wharves. Great fortunes were made, splendid mansions built, and a prosperous population multiplied. The town bank was (and is) called the Pacific National Bank, because the Pacific Ocean was the hunting ground. With the advent of kerosene the local economy collapsed, and people moved away.

Historic preservation, albeit inadvertent, began right there, at the turn of the century. The town of Nantucket owes much of its architectural purity to the fact that most of the people who stayed on after the whaling period could not afford to modernize. Except for low-lying parts destroyed by a series of fires, the town of Nantucket became a sort of architectural time capsule, for the most part untouched during World War I, the roaring twenties (whose prosperity gave Nantucket only a bit of tourism), the Depression, and World War II. As tourism slowly expanded, summer people bought houses to restore rather than modernize. A stroll today in the relatively quiet month of, say, November, up past the bank, off upper Main Street, and along the streets, lanes, and alleys of the town, is a unique and oddly moving experience. One seems to float along, borne up by the simple elegance of the buildings, the beauty of their proportions, and the aura of philosophical certitude they somehow suggest. The


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sensation is not nostalgia for the past, as in so many cute historic renovation projects, but respect for the past. It isn't a project, it's a town, and not an illusion of a town. It doesn't try to make you feel something, so to speak. In its integrity, so to speak, it doesn't care.

Nantucketers tend to be proud people, independent-minded (perhaps to some extent in reaction to their abject economic dependence on the summer people), suspicious of change, fierce in their defense of local political power, naïve about the uses of power, and extremely suspicious of state and federal government. They are proud of their own town meeting, but that's as far as they will go. Anything town meeting can't handle, they'd rather not think about. A particularly poignant situation, since Nantucket has been discovered, and town meeting will never be able to get itself together fast enough to deal with the problem.

The island is small, shaped something like a fat boomerang, fifteen miles long. The winter population is



Bikes parked on Nantucket Town's wharf

roughly six thousand souls. Total real-estate transactions in 1985 were in excess of $150 million. Summer-people money—about $25,000 of it, in a single year, for every year-round resident (almost none of whom are involved in these sales). The building inspector describes what is going on not as a boom but as a "frenzy." Every patch of even slightly high ground (water view!) is being built on. Ordinary houses on the water go for $500,000 up, special houses for up to $2.5 million. Scrap land is $100,000 an acre. The town government is overwhelmed and unsure about policy. The Planning Board often acts counterproductively to its expressed conservationist concerns, attempting to slow down building by getting tough about roads, for instance, making people pave them to subdivide one lot. All over the island perfectly adequate (and lovely) dirt roads are being paved, at great expense, which in turn forces the subdivision and sale of even more lots to pay for the paving. Everyone seems to be suing everyone else, as well as the Board of Selectmen, the Planning Board, and the Historic Districts Commission. Meanwhile, the island has become a big-money turf, and much of its special charm has already been lost. It is not just the land that is fragile, but the community as well.

Efforts at damage control are under way. Nantucket Islands Land Bank Commission, funded by two percent of all real-estate sales, buys bits of land to preserve open space for public use. Community-based groups work for preservation. Rich people donate land, or buy it up to take it off the market. People are trying, but it's an uphill battle. Nantucket is using nineteenth-century ideas to deal with a twentieth-century threat, and the truth is no one knows what's going to happen, except that, probably, it won't be good.

For the time being, Nantucket Town, and the island as a whole, remain unique in their special beauty. Much has *not* changed. There is a public golf course, for instance, down at the Siasconset end of the island—a nine-hole course reputed to be one of the oldest in the United States, owned and operated by the Coffin family (a famous whaling name), which will never be on the *Wide World of Sports,* and where electric carts will never roll. Serious golfers would find it dull, because the point of this gently rolling park is to make the game as easy and inviting as possible. Great, wide, forgiving fairways, generous greens, and open spaces all seem designed to remind the player that a leisurely walk through nine holes can mean more than a series of problems involving the little white ball. Look around you, the course seems to whisper, regard the miles and miles of open moors stretching to the horizon, watch the fog bank coming in over Tom Nevers Head, see the blue sky over the South Shore, listen to the quiet. This is Nantucket, and you'll never see its like. □



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PROJECTED FANTASIES

How the movies became America's most potent transmitter of design

By Martin Filler



For thirty glorious years—roughly from 1920 to 1950—most people learned about decorating in the same place where they learned how to kiss: at the movies. Millions of filmgoers (61 percent of the public went weekly in 1937) were regularly exposed not only to depictions of ways of life far removed from their own but also to the latest developments in design. Transmitted to the masses with greater speed and realism than ever before, new modes of decorating caught on with bedazzled consumers who saw the movies as the ultimate authority on how to live the good life. By the end of World War II, two full generations of Americans had been raised at the movies, which shaped their visual taste to an unprecedented degree: the Hollywood bed, the sunken bathtub, the "vanity" dressing table, the white telephone, blond wood, venetian blinds, glass block, linoleum, and a rapid succession of styles both modern and historical—including Art Deco, Streamline Moderne, and the Victorian Revival—were among the popular trends set off by motion pictures.



The pervasive presence of movie design on the American cultural scene is in fact only one focus of "Hollywood: Legend and Reality," a fascinating show organized by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service on view at New York's Cooper-Hewitt Museum through October 12 on the second stop of a two-year national tour. The 450-piece exhibition and its accompanying catalogue, edited by the curator, Michael Webb (Little, Brown, $39.95; $19.95 paper), survey the entire process of filmmaking—screenwriting, producing, directing, cinematography, special effects, musical scoring, and editing—but the sections of the show devoted to sets and costumes have by far the greatest appeal.



Clearly and correctly directed to be boffo at the box office, "Hollywood: Legend and Reality" contains several concentrations of material from the greatest crowd-pleasers of all time. *Gone with the Wind,* considered the most popular movie ever made, is represented by no fewer than 35 items, including Scarlett O'Hara's flouncy white dress from the movie's first scene, a sketch for the façade of Tara,

Top left: Concept sketch by J. MacMillan Johnson for the parlor of the Butler house in *Gone with the Wind* (1939). *Left:* Detail of matte painting of the Emerald City used in filming *The Wizard of Oz* (1939). *Above:* Robert Cottingham's 1969 painting of 20th Century–Fox's Streamline Moderne logotype.



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Paisleys, paisleys, paisleys— and other decorating ideas from India— conquer the West.



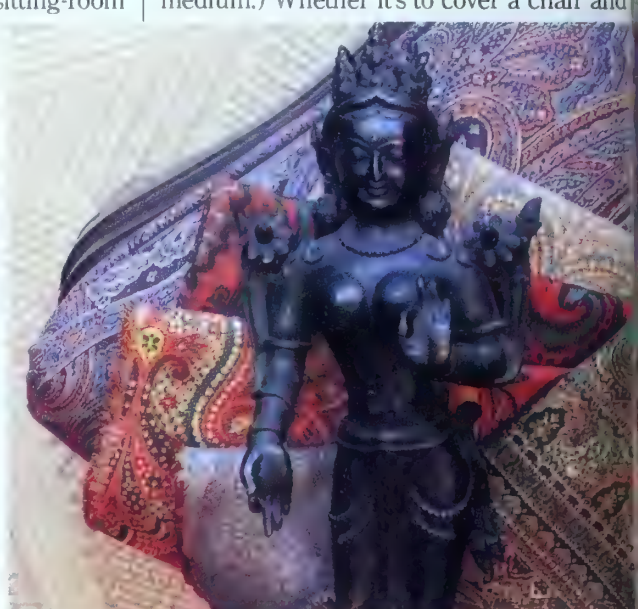
OPULENTLY designed shawls from Kashmir—some with richly embroidered borders, others with all-over patterns—took the fashionable world by storm in the mid-1800's. Soon, mills in the obscure Scottish town of Paisley were turning out their own versions. (These, in their turn, proceeded to take the world by storm to the tune of one million pounds sterling per year; they have become sought-after antiques, and are collected world-wide, today.)

Despite its Scottishness, the name Paisley continues to be often mistakenly identified as a region in India. But there's no mistake about the design motif: warmly exotic, distinctive and appealing, every swirl of every paisley says "India." Surprisingly, this passage from India—a native design coming to belong to the rest of the world—has been going on for some three thousand years.

For a start, the whole technique of printing on fabrics was invented in India; sophisticated methods for printing and dyeing in a range of colors that seemed to know no inhibition were well developed when Europe and even Japan were mostly monochromatic and purely primitive. The list of other decorative ideas from India extends all the way from such homey things as seersucker (from *shir-o-shakar,* literally milk and sugar) and calico (from *Calicut,* India) to such surprisingly "English" things as chintz and such "American" discoveries as the bungalow. And then there's also sturdy khaki, luxurious cashmere, today's ubiquitous dhurries, kindly crewel, and the ever-popular madras cottons. Probably no other culture can show as pervasive an influence on the fabric inventory of the world as does India—and the influence continues as dynamically as ever, even in today's volatile times.



In the San Francisco bed-sitting-room shown here, interior designer Scott Lamb has brought the warmth and design exuberance of India to a typical San Francisco Victorian room. He transforms it with a romantic mixture of raj, courtly and native India and achieves a 1980's version of stylish comfort and lush informality. The day-bed is upholstered in *Faner,* a herringbone-woven cotton stripe, that recalls the sturdy peasant work-fabrics of India, though it's actually woven in Schumacher's own New Jersey mill. The curtains are *Srinigar,* a pure silk with an embroidered-looking windowpane check that's an exclusive Schumacher import from India. The wing chair and the onion-dome-shaped screen are covered in Schumacher's companion fabric and wallpaper *Khyber,* based on an authentic embroidery motif. The Victorian-looking rug is another import from India, also exclusive with Schumacher. But the key to the room's special ambience is the paisley-bordered fabric *Rajah,* in Indienne red, made into a table cover and also dressing up the bolsters. The same fabric, in indigo, can be seen in the lower left picture on the upholstered seat of a carved antique chair from Goa.



A sampling of the wide range of colors, the lavish variety of motifs and the subtle design that paisleys are heir to, can be seen in the center picture on this page. The jewel-like colors, the seemingly endless catalogue of sensuous swirls—are all controlled by a very sophisticated design intelligence. (The wool rug in the background of this picture, incidentally, is a happy translation of the crisp texture of straw matting into a more lasting medium.) Whether it's to cover a chair and brighten up a dark corner or to create a sensational sofa in an elegant living room; whether it's bedroom, kitchen or bath; there's no place that a paisley can't help. With drama, with color, with enthusiasm. No wonder Scotland and then the world were conquered. No wonder the conquest continues to this very day.

From just about the time that paisleys from Paisley had become well established as a fashionable household word, F. Schumacher and Co. has been supplying America's interior designers and architects with the world's best for the comfortable, fashionable household. Importing, producing, commissioning, and inspiring—fabrics, wall-coverings, rugs and carpets. Wherever today's ideas are coming from, knowing professionals looking for infallible choices seem invariably to agree that the one place not to be missed is "surely, Schumacher."

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and several of the painstakingly worked-out storyboards plotting the action virtually frame by frame. More recent hits, such as George Lucas's phenomenally successful *Star Wars* series, are also emphasized, with twenty objects from that trilogy, including the golden metallic carapace worn by the robot C3PO.

This sentimental saunter down Memory Lane is a great deal of fun, but it is also highly instructive in tracing the major currents of twentieth-century architecture and design and showing how they were absorbed into this most populist of art forms. The movies' coming of age might well be placed at the moment when the medium's early makers ceased to see it as a mere diversion and fully recognized its aesthetic potential. Among the first and greatest to do so was the director D. W. Griffith, whose grandiose vision was realized in the legendary Babylon sequence of his 1916 masterpiece, *Intolerance,* combining an architectural conception of megalomaniacal magnificence with inventive cinematographic techniques that still evoke admiration from professionals. One of this exhibition's most memorable images is a photograph of that set, a 165-foot-tall citadel dwarfing the modest bungalows surrounding it in the working-class neighborhood of East Hollywood.

Though the re-creation of grandeur in the name of authenticity was a frequent excuse for building large-scale sets during the early days of the movie industry, new directions in high-style design played an important role from about 1920 onward. Natacha Rambova (who later married Rudolph Valentino) took her set and costume schemes for the 1922 film *Salome* from Aubrey Beardsley's decadent Art Nouveau drawings for Oscar Wilde's play of the same name. The designs made two years later by the prolific and influential William Cameron Menzies for *The Thief of Bagdad* can now be appreciated as a link in transmitting the ideas of the Wiener Werkstätte to America. Most important was the 1925 Exposition des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes in Paris, which gave its name to Art Deco. It became a momentous event in movie-design history, and that style found an enthusiastic reception in this country and its cinema during the second half of a decade of unprecedented prosperity.

Those years also witnessed the rise of the Hollywood art director to new prominence as the burgeoning studios vied with one another to make movies of greater glamour and gorgeousness. Although "Hollywood: Legend and Reality" provides much documentary evidence through production sketches



Façade sketch for *The Thief of Bagdad* (1924) by William Cameron Menzies, recalling Vienna Secession designs.

and stills, the catalogue's text is pretty thin stuff, and its treatment of this major turning point in film design history is far too perfunctory and vague; a much better account can be found in the recently published *Screen Deco* by Howard Mandelbaum and Eric Myers (St. Martin's, $24.95). Its text is concise—perhaps too brief in light of the insights that still wait to be mined from this highly inferential material—but it is an intelligent recapitulation, and its 250 illustrations fully convey the star treatment that design was accorded in Hollywood's heyday.

As movies grew in complexity and the studios' desire to impress audiences increased, art directors were more likely to function as supervisory executives than as practicing designers. They commanded huge staffs, which at the major film companies were subdivided into small specializations of labor: for example, the art department at RKO—which dreamed up the Deco dance extravaganzas of Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers—was ruled by Van Nest Polglase. He was aided by five unit art directors, one of whom was in charge of 110 men working solely on furniture and carpets. Art directors attained even greater power as each individual studio devised a distinctive "look" that became its most readily identifiable feature beyond its

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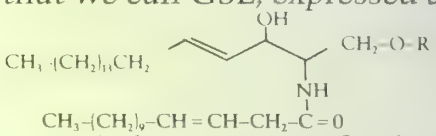
"Nothing, as far as I know, has a greater effect on the quality of life than aging, for it affects all of our organs including the body's largest organ—our skin.

"It is, in fact, on the skin that the effects of aging are most visible. And perhaps most disturbing.

"This concern with aging and its impact on the quality of life is the major reason for my involvement with the Schaefer Institute in Switzerland. It was the principal focus of my work there.

"During this period my colleagues and I determined that a specific type of Glycosphingolipid was more abundant in young skin than in older skin.

"These efforts were the basis for the development of a complex which contains a specific Glycosphingolipid that we call GSL, expressed as:



"I believe as a result of these efforts people may be able to significantly improve the quality of their lives."



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corporate logotype. (The most architectural of all is the Streamline Moderne opening symbol of 20th Century–Fox, still in use and looking quite stylish after some fifty years.)

Cedric Gibbons, who headed the art department at Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer for over three decades from the studio's founding in 1924, was trained as an architect and favored crisply outlined, high-contrast compositions that exploited technical advances in photography. New incandescent lighting and panchromatic film made it possible for the first time to use pure white in movie set designs, which in the days of less defined arc lighting and less sensitive orthochromatic film was eschewed in favor of the pale pastels that reproduced more convincingly as white than the real thing. Warner Brothers' Anton Grot indulged the surrealistic choreographic fantasies of Busby Berkeley, in which dancers and scenery merged in the nearest thing to pure abstraction ever seen on the American screen. At Paramount, Hans



Sketch by Robert Usher for Mae West's boudoir in *She Done Him Wrong* (1933), with swan bed on bearskin rug.

Dreier perfected a more romantic, Continental style. Paramount's lavish productions by Cecil B. DeMille became a watchword for pious pageantry with unmistakably lascivious undertones. Josef von Sternberg's mountings for Marlene Dietrich epitomized a perverse erotic exoticism, and those of Ernst Lubitsch for the same studio were synonymous with his chic and sophisticated touch. As Lubitsch put it, "There is Paramount Paris and Metro Paris, and of course the real Paris. Paramount's is the most Parisian of all." New talent was constantly sought, and the parade of avant-garde designers who went to Hollywood included the American Norman Bel Geddes (Paramount) and the Europeans Erté (MGM), Paul Iribe (Paramount), Willy Pogany (Warner Brothers), and Joseph Urban (William Randolph Hearst's Cosmopolitan Productions).

Other innovations stemmed from less progressive motives. The Production Code Administration was instituted in 1934 in response to boycott threats from the American Legion of Decency. It not only caused the suppression of double entendre and sexual innuendo in the manner of Mae West (whose screen boudoirs were as suggestive as her dialogue), but also led to noteworthy modifications of the way in which sets were designed. Item IX of the Production Code stipulated that "the treatment of bedrooms must be governed by good taste and delicacy," which translated into twin beds, even for married movie couples. Bathtub scenes, for years a staple of the voyeuristic DeMille formula, were suddenly forbidden. And even such innocuous impromptu decorating tips as the famous "Wall of Jericho"—the blanket-on-a-clothesline used by Clark Gable as a room divider to shield the virtue of Claudette Colbert in the 1934 smash *It Happened One Night*—entered the realm of taboo.

The sublimation of cinematic sex and sets that implied it led to an insufferable high-mindedness that found its most characteristic outlet in turgid period biographies and tedious costume dramas. Hollywood's notions of historical accuracy could often be laughable in the extreme, but when its designers were called upon to envision a symbol of contemporary yearnings they often did so with remarkable success. Two films of the late thirties included in the SITES Hollywood show epitomize the use of modern architecture as an emblem of aspiration to a better world. *Lost Horizon,* James Hilton's between-the-wars tract for peace in his time, was brought to the screen for Columbia in 1937 by director Frank Capra and designer Stephen Gooson. Their lamasery of Shangri-la was no Himalayan Xanadu, but rather



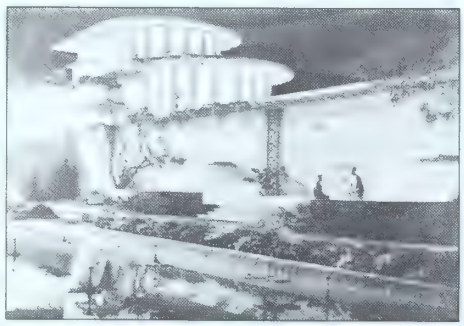


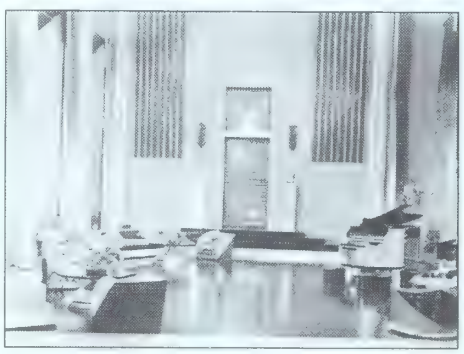
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mixed the streamlined forms pioneered by the German modernist architect Erich Mendelsohn with the fanciful appliqués of thirties World's Fair pavilions. It was futuristic, but also transcendent and pacific, a redoubt of undoubted goodness in a world that was turning ever more evil.

MGM's 1939 classic *The Wizard of Oz,* a grown-up children's movie as Freudian as Disney's fairy tales, also had a significant architectural centerpiece. Actually, the Emerald City existed in its entirety only as a matte painting, inserted during the processing phase to provide a destination for the Yellow Brick Road, which was set up and photographed on a sound stage without a backdrop. Designed by Edwin B. Willis under the supervision of Cedric Gibbons, the Emerald City derived directly from the unbuilt visionary projects of the German Expressionists twenty years earlier (with perhaps some influence as well from the Italian Futurists). Its crystalline, pinnacled forms—part mineral specimen, part skyscraper metropolis, part Art Deco Chartres—recalled the quasi-religious symbolism that in 1919 inspired the German Expressionist architect Bruno Taut to propose that "the Gothic cathedral is the prelude to glass architecture."





Top: The Streamline Moderne lamasery of Shangri-la designed by Stephen Gooson for Frank Capra's *Lost Horizon* (1937). *Above:* The high-contrast style of MGM's Cedric Gibbons is typified by his Art Deco set for *The Single Standard* (1929).

World War II brought a shift away from modernist pipe dreams and toward the romantically idealized reminiscence of an American past far more wonderful than it was the first time around. A craze for Victoriana swept the studios, and such well-upholstered productions as MGM's *Meet Me in St. Louis* (1944), 20th Century–Fox's *Centennial Summer* (1946), and Warner Brothers' *Life with Father* (1947) offered a reassuring retreat from modern times that seemed far less attractive by contrast. Decorating magazines echoed this historicist boomlet, and although the Victorian Revival cannot be said to have seriously endangered the forward march of modernism, it is now interesting to recall that nineteenth-century design was not resurrected for the first time during the 1980s, directly from what some have claimed was Bauhaus-imposed oblivion.

Despite its lack of a rigorously analytical approach, "Hollywood: Legend and Reality" is a welcome opportunity to reexamine some of the liveliest if most ephemeral landmarks of twentieth-century American culture. Along with the skyscraper, jazz, and Abstract Expressionism, the movies are among our most characteristic indigenous art forms. All of them, of course, have been done elsewhere by now, and sometimes very well indeed, but never with greater style and conviction than our originals at their best. What one realizes at the end of this show is that long ago the distinction between Hollywood's legend and reality somehow became irreversibly blurred. We the moviegoing public have been instrumental in that transformation, to the point that having an actor as our national leading man has come to seem the most natural thing in the world. □

"Hollywood: Legend and Reality," made possible by a grant from Time Inc., travels to the Center for the Fine Arts, Miami, Florida (Nov. 29, 1986–Feb. 15, 1987), the Cincinnati Art Museum (Apr. 13–June 23, 1987), The Denver Art Museum (Aug. 19–Oct. 25, 1987), and the Natural History Museum, Los Angeles (Dec. 5, 1987–Feb. 22, 1988).

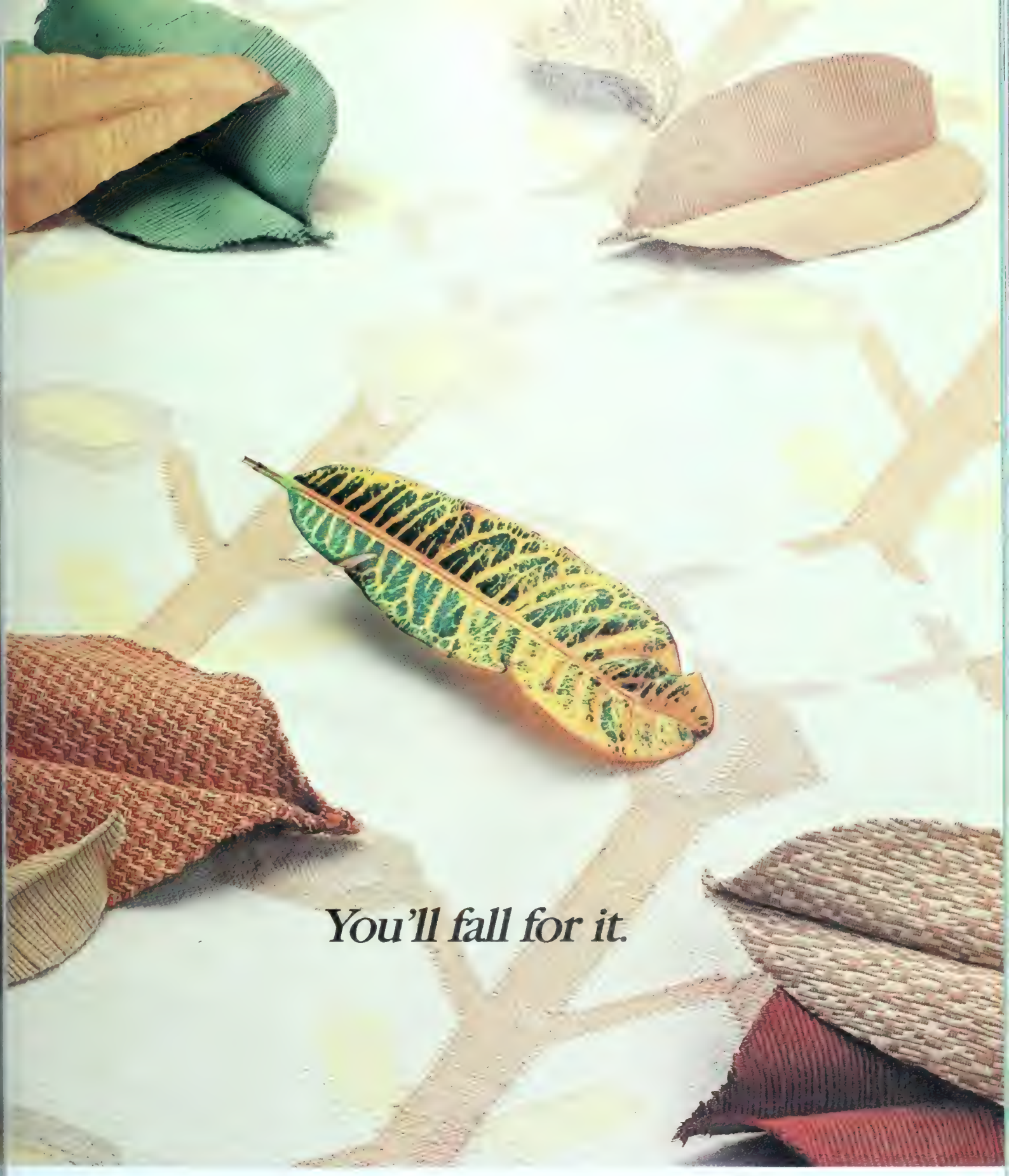
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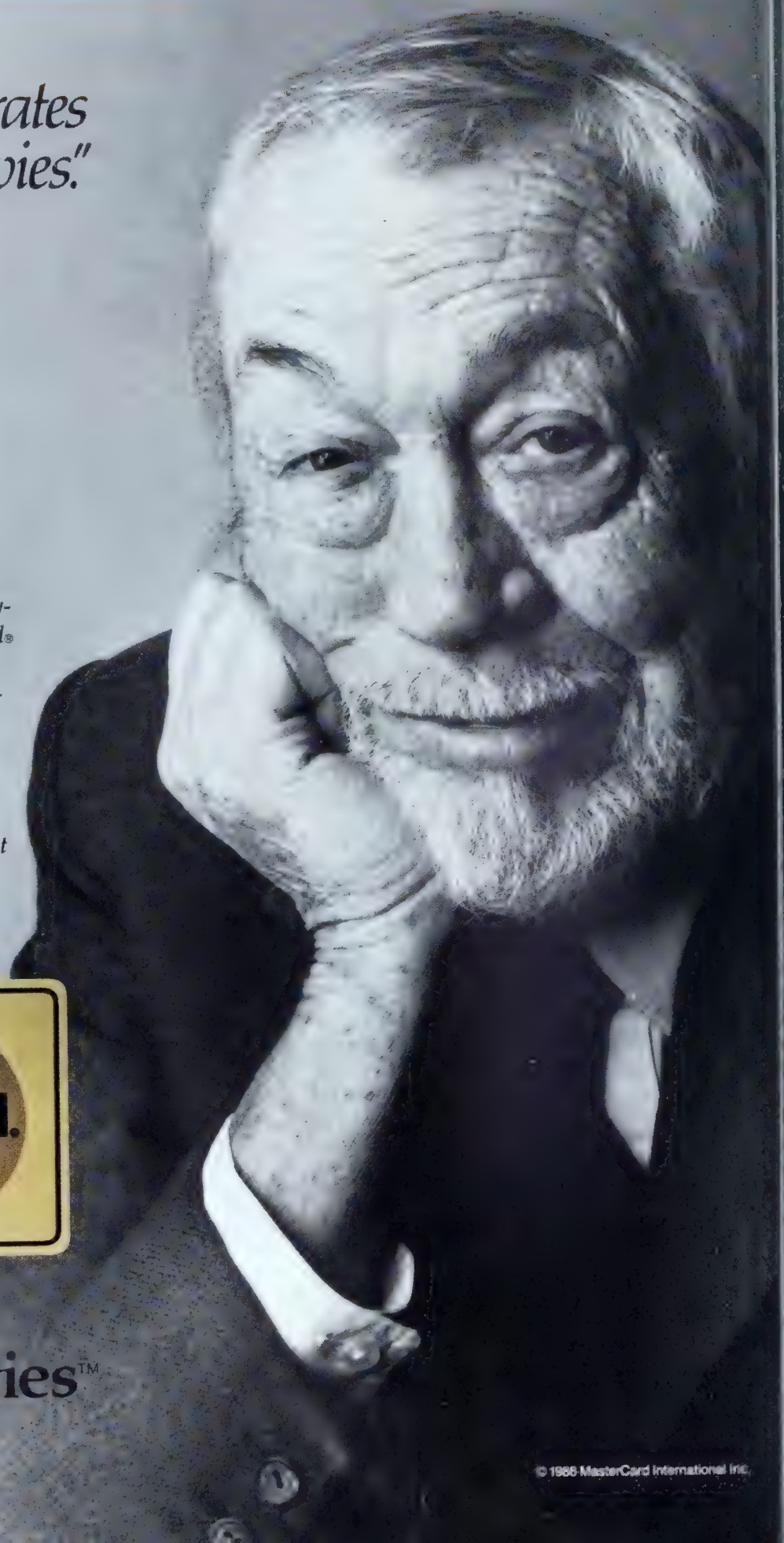
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IN SEARCH OF THE REAL PALLADIO

By Robert M. Adams

Writing early in the sixteenth century, the conservative Venetian banker Girolamo Priuli was shocked and dismayed at the behavior of his fellow patricians.

"Since the noblemen and citizens of Venice had enriched themselves [he said], *they wished to enjoy their success and to live in the Terrafirma* on the Italian mainland, in the district near Venice known as the Veneto]. . . *devoting themselves to pleasure, delight, and the country life, meanwhile abandoning navigation and maritime activities. These were certainly more laborious and troublesome, but it was from the sea that all benefits came. We can judge the damage inflicted by the Terrafirma on the city of Venice from the way in which her intoxicated nobles, citizens and people bought estates and houses on the Terrafirma and paid twice as much as they were worth. They paid 20–25 ducats per* campo *of land* [almost an acre], *which yielded less than 3–4 percent per annum, and subsequently erected palaces and houses on these estates, which consumed large sums of money. . . . Nonetheless, there was no man of means, among nobility, citizenry, or populace, who failed to buy at least one estate and house on the Terrafirma, especially in the Padovano and Trevigiano, for these were nearby regions, and they could go and stay there and return in a day or two."*



Villa Foscari ("La Malcontenta"), *top,* and Gualtiero's frescoes, *above,* in sala del nettuno of Villa Godi-Malinverni.

What the spendthrift Venetians were putting up, in unprecedented numbers, were in fact, Venetian villas—of which there came to be, as of the present writing, nearly forty thousand. A few are palaces of almost imperial splendor, others are very modest country homes; they include some of the most beautiful and tasteful private residences in the world. But surely Signor Priuli was right, that they represented a mighty imprudence, even a frivolity. After more than a thousand

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VIVIEN LEIGH

as

SCARLETT O'HARA

in Gone with the Wind

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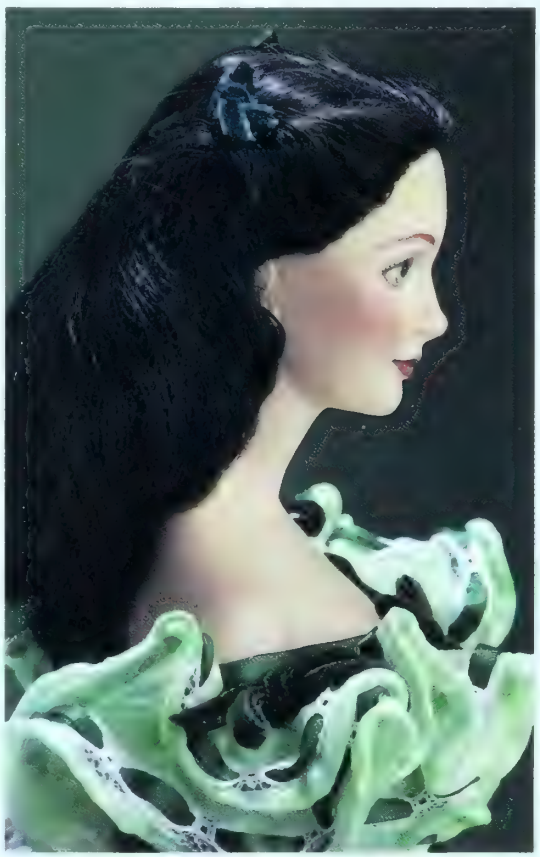
In Vivien Leigh's brilliant, Oscar-winning performance as Scarlett, she evoked the very essence of Scarlett's indomitable spirit . . . her beauty . . . her incomparable charm and vitality.

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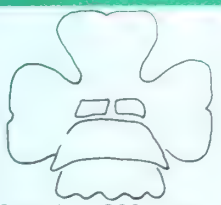


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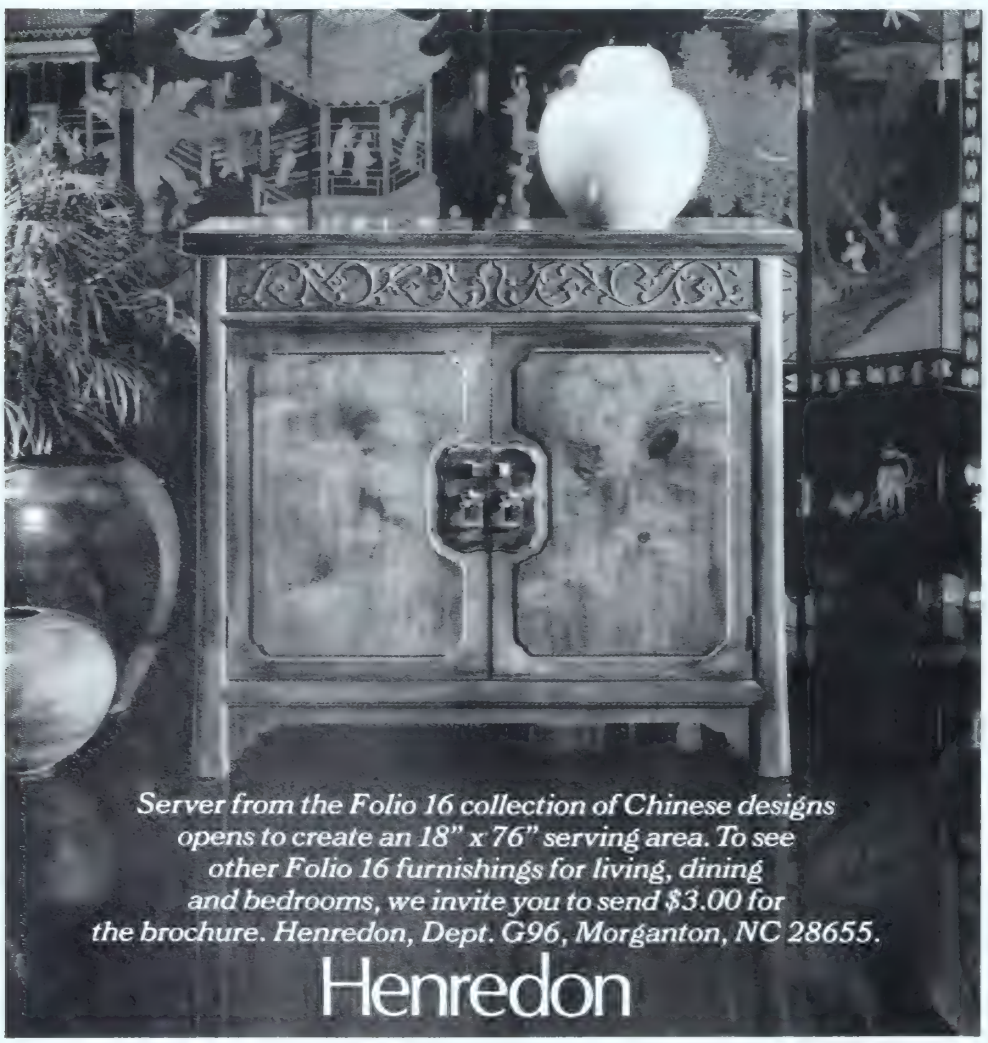
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years of sustained, strenuous, and often precarious existence, Venetian society was becoming distinctly mature, maybe even decadent. The city had suffered one terrible loss in 1453 when the Turks overran Constantinople, cutting sharply into Venetian trade with the Levant; in 1500 the Portuguese, led by Vasco da Gama, doubled the Cape of Good Hope and found a way to break the Venetian monopoly of the lucrative Oriental trade in silk and spices. Not quite ten years later, at the classic battle of Agnadello, the Venetians suffered a crushing military defeat which apparently stripped them at a blow of the land empire they had been assembling laboriously, piece by piece, for more than a century. Under the circumstances, was it not folly to start building pleasure houses on the mainland? So it seemed to Priuli and to his contemporary Andrea Mocenigo: a sure sign of decadence. And in fact Venice did ultimately decline and lose her independence. But that did not happen till 1807—for another three hundred years, in other words—and then under circumstances and for reasons entirely different from those of the sixteenth century.

Appearances to the contrary, the great Terrafirma building boom of the sixteenth century made all sorts of economic sense. For though the Venetians had been beaten in 1509 and their empire dismembered, the coalition against them broke up almost at once. Cities like Verona, Vicenza, and Padua, which had been "liberated," found they needed the markets, mariners, and money of Venice; voluntarily, they came back to the fold, as allies if not possessions. For another thing, when the Venetian gentry moved into their new villas, their motives were not altogether frivolous. They did not build castles, the futility of which had been demonstrated by the late war (in which artillery played a decisive role); neither did they erect mere pleasure domes. With curious unanimity, they constructed dignified and elegantly appointed farmhouses, which proclaimed the owner a man of taste and learning, yet kept him in touch with the day-to-day farming operations by which the estate earned its keep. (A curious and striking exception was the Pisani family, who built one of their three villas, La Rocca, atop a bare hill near Lonigo; they were so standoffish toward their neighbors that the very peasants bringing supplies to the villa had to pass through a long tunnel into the subcellar, lest their presence contaminate the view from the gentry's lofty and leisured windows.)

For the most part, the gentry lived in their villas during the summer months, when a country house—by contrast with hot, cramped, and smelly Venice—could appear a veritable paradise for the owner, his family, and his grateful guests. Stewards and overseers took care of the place during the winter. And while it was true that farming in this genteel manner didn't yield staggering profits, as commerce occasionally could, it was also less precarious and less demanding. Priuli was right; most estates earned only three or four percent on the owner's original investment. Yet steadily and silently the estates appreciated in value, and the same *campo* that scandalized the moralist in 1525 by costing 25 ducats sold a century later for 100. Fortunes were still *made* in trade and commerce, even after the Portuguese threat subsided (only to be replaced by more serious and extended competition from the French, English, and German traders); but fortunes were *preserved* by investments in real estate, mostly on the Terrafirma.

Visiting the villas of the Veneto isn't very difficult if one rents a car, makes a few preliminary arrangements, takes a little time to tour the countryside, and possesses at least a few smatterings of bad Italian. The Ente Provinciale per il Turismo di Vicenza puts out a splendid illustrated pamphlet describing five different *itinerarii* starting from and returning to Vicenza—day-trips, in a word. There are no fewer than 53 villas to be visited. Some of these are regularly open to the public, others only during certain hours of certain days, which the Ente will explain to you; for others special permission is required, and that they can generally get for you. A few villas are not open to visitors at all; but the greater problem is choosing among



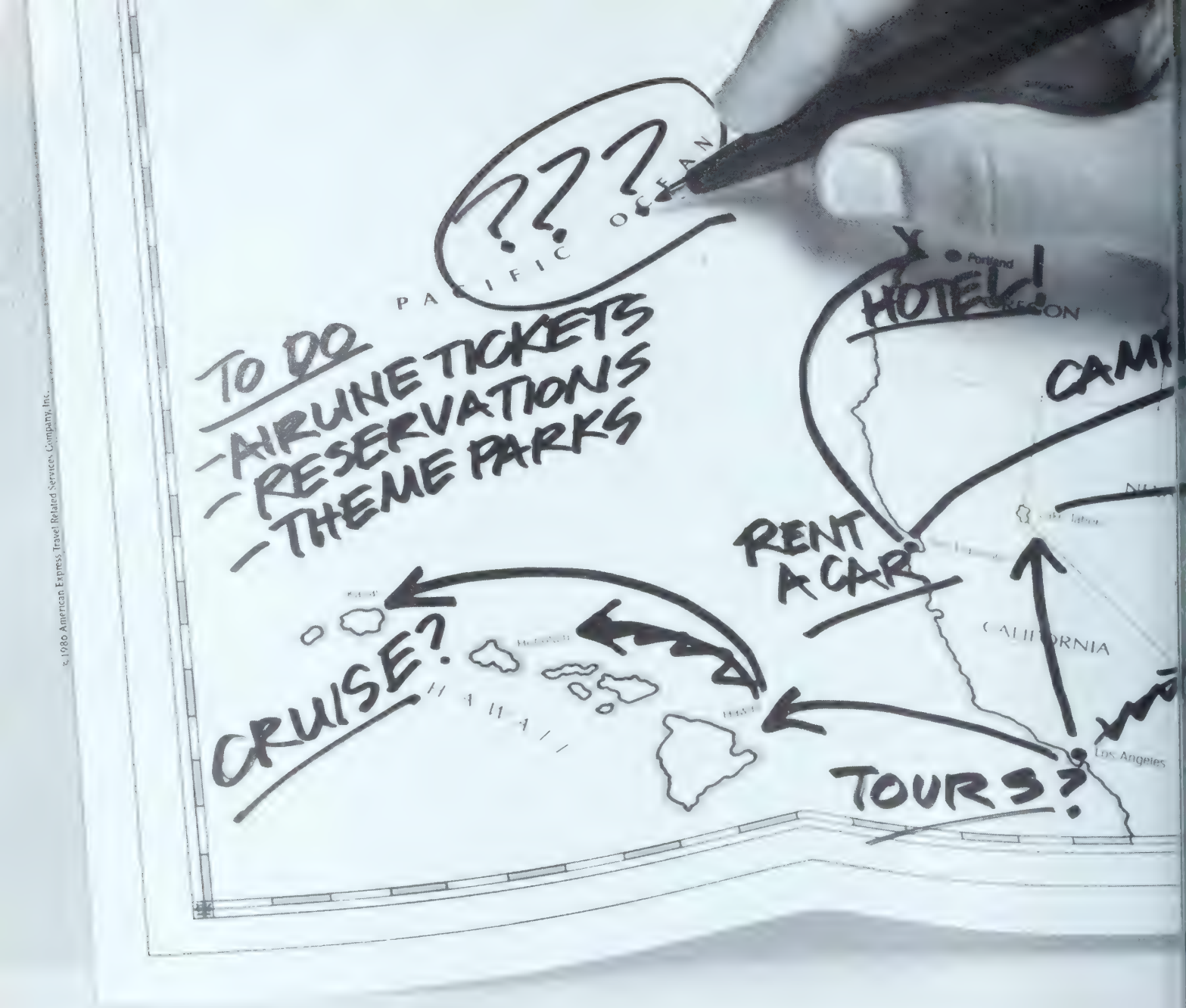
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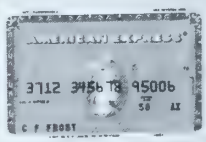
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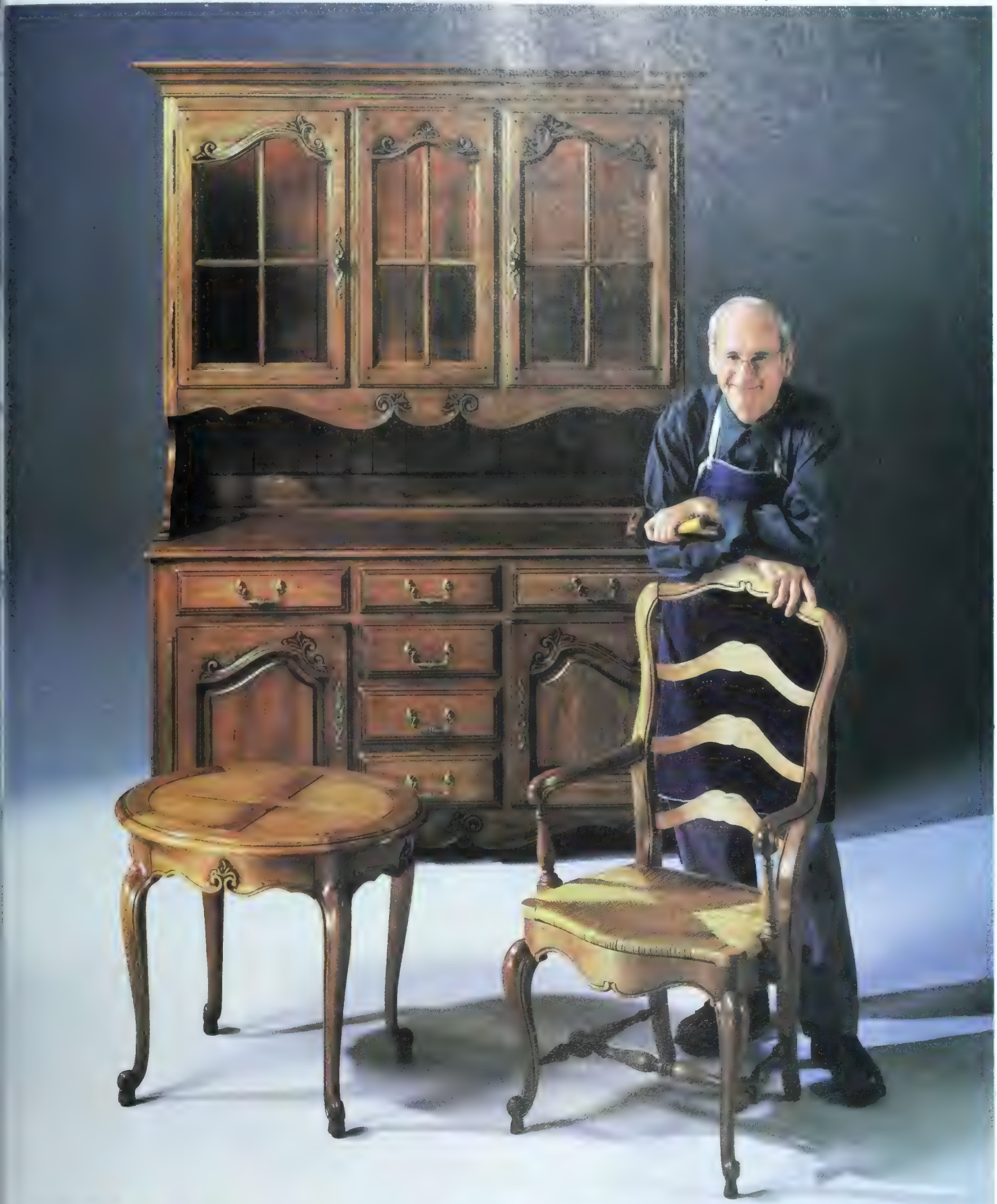
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the dozens that are available. Even seeing only three or four villas a day for seven days, we found ourselves approaching satiety and confusion. On the other hand, the Ente, realizing that man does not live by villas alone, includes with its list of itineraries a brief gastronomic guidebook, describing country inns where one can rest from one's labors, share a bottle of Valpolicella, and choose between a trout, a half-chicken, or a bit of roast lamb. Nothing hinders you from digesting your impressions at the same time.

We dealt more often with tenants and caretakers than with actual proprietors; but people were, almost unfailingly, gracious. Vittorio, a caretaker at one villa, was not only eager to show us all 38 of the bedrooms and bathrooms in the villa he supervised; he pressed upon us three bottles of the wine of the estate, and implored us to look up the children of the proprietor, now resident in New York. Navigating the dirt roads of the back country presented some problems, lack of signs being one of the more obvious. (Maps are fine for the larger roads, but the little old ones, on which villas are often found, call for a good deal of dead reckoning and a lot of luck.) Distances are trifling, by American standards; most of the villas lie within 25 miles of Vicenza, but an adventurous villa collector can easily reach out to the villas around Padua—for which a fine guide is distributed by the Ente Provinciale per il Turismo di Padova. As often in Europe, it's amazing how small a deviation from the standard guidebook routes gets one out into the completely untouristed, if not always unspoiled, countryside. We went in late March, by way of avoiding the humid weather and overcrowding of the high tourist season—which worked out well enough—but mid or late April would have been just as uncrowded and less disturbed by the occasional rain shower.

The great originator of Venetian villa-building was Andrea Palladio, active through the middle part of the sixteenth century. He was a stonecutter from Vicenza, first employed with hammer and chisel in rebuilding the villa of Gian Giorgio Trissino, a man of general if not universal learning. Trissino was struck with the young mason's native intelligence, made learned books available to him, and financed a trip to Rome, where Palladio studied the ruins of the ancient city to learn the principles of design and proportion.

The practical side of Palladio's planning was much appreciated in his own time, and can still tickle the fancy. The barns, shops, and storage rooms associated with the villas (which made them, as he was happy to say, like so many little cities) he incorporated with the central building, but in positions subordinate to it. The second floor of the central structure, the *piano nobile*, took pride of place as the living quarters of the master and his family; working and storage facilities occupied the first floor, or were placed behind long curved colonnades (*barchesse*), which reached out on either side of the main house as if to embrace the visitor. But they could also be used to store rakes, scythes, wagons, and wine barrels, while they provided a convenient passageway in wet weather for the master to visit the different parts of his establishment. The nymphaeum at Villa Barbaro in Maser was built around a decorative pool, which incidentally supplied fish for the master's table; the water, overflowing, passed into the kitchen, and afterward served to irrigate the vegetable garden. Because Palladio was not building for monarchs, prelates, or anyone else with an unlimited purse, his domestic designs call for relatively little expensive marble or intricate stone carving. The majority of his buildings, including even the columns, are made of brick covered with stucco. It is very likely that in the early days many of these stucco surfaces were painted and repainted to suit the varying tastes of the color-conscious Venetians. Some exterior façades were even covered with large-scale frescoes which, though badly weathered after three hundred years, can still be deciphered. This style of decoration was more common in the cities than in the country during the Renaissance, but Palladio used it, and it may remind us that even the classic Greeks painted their statues in bold colors.



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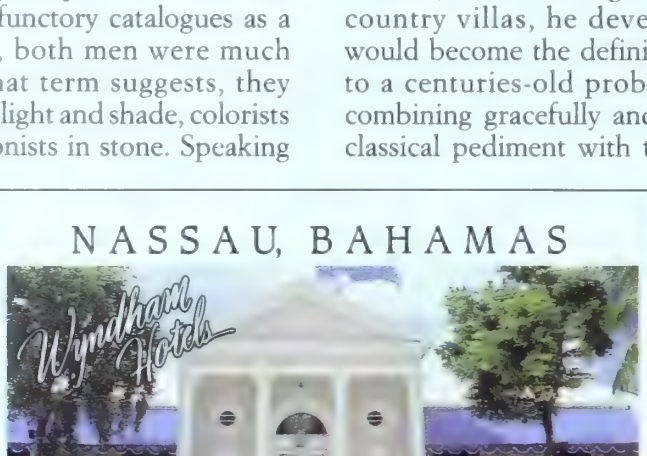
The aesthetic qualities of Palladio's villas were supplied by the taste and discretion of the architect, working closely with his patron, often a man of learning himself. As has been reemphasized by Rudolf Wittkower, Palladio lived in an age when a distinct, divine, universal set of proportions was understood to control the frame of the human body, the structure of the earth and the heavens, and the harmonic scales of music, both on earth and among the heavenly spheres. Palladio was a student of these Pythagorean proportions and ratios; he applied them (only rarely with mathematical precision) to the design of his buildings; they are responsible for subtleties of inflection and emphasis within a pattern of formal neoclassic symmetry. In fact, though Palladio, like the nineteenth-century sculptor Canova, is listed in the perfunctory catalogues as a neoclassicist, both men were much more than that term suggests, they were artists in light and shade, colorists and impressionists in stone. Speaking of Palladio, someone has used the lovely expression, "architecture that breathes."

The chilling epithet "neoclassical" descended on Palladio because he introduced and regularly used the classic portico consisting of columns supporting a pediment; but, as always with this architect, the story involves elements more complex than simple mechanical copying. Classical architects reserved the column-and-pediment form for their temples; Palladio applied it to villas because he cared more for the dignity of the shape than for the precise decorum of its application. Knowing his clients to be men of aristocratic aspirations (if not backgrounds), he recognized the value of the pediment as a conspicuous place for them to erect the family crest, motto, or name. And on the side, while working on façades for country villas, he developed what would become the definitive solution to a centuries-old problem, that of combining gracefully and naturally a classical pediment with the tripartite structure of a Christian basilica. The successful solution, which is a double pediment—or a strong sharp pediment overshadowing a larger but interrupted pediment—can be seen in the two great Venetian churches dating from the last years of Palladio's life San Giorgio and Il Redentore. Typically, the solution is one of illusion, even impressionism, yet the effect carries total conviction. The two churches represent the final triumph of a career that developed with the same steady and luminous coherence that marks Palladio's buildings themselves.

Altogether, about twenty Palladian villas survive, in various stages of repair, disrepair, and reconstruction about ten others were designed but never executed, or have since been destroyed. One of the latter, a magnificent Villa Trissino at Meledo, became more influential through its publication in Palladio's book (II,10) than most of those that were actually built The Villa Capra, also known as "La Rotonda" or "Monticello," has become world-famous; Lord Burlington's version of it at Chiswick London, and Jefferson's in Charlottesville, Virginia, are only two of many adaptations of the design—which, to tell the truth, is better suited in most climates for a summer house than a year-round residence. That is how the original serves today for the Counts of Valmarana, its present owners.

An important part of decorating the villas was furnishing them with suitable paintings and statuary, both indoors and out. Veronese was the first major muralist to work on the early villas; his paintings at Maser add light color, and frivolity to the lucid, austere structure, and it is a terrible loss that another complete cycle of pictures at Villa Soranza in Treville was demolished early in the nineteenth century Followers and to some extent imitators of Veronese were G. B. Zelotti and G A. Fasolo; while in the early eighteenth century the Tiepolos, father and son did extraordinary work which can still be appreciated at the Villa Valmarana ("Ai Nani") in Vicenza and the Villa Cordellina-Lombardi in Montecchio Maggiore. Evidently the painters rejoiced in the lack of constraint provided by a rural setting, lay patrons and a holiday atmosphere, for their

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pictures are full of visual tricks and illusions. In the villa at Maser a huntsman and his dogs seem to stride into the house from outdoors through a painted doorway; and in the Villa Caldogno an eager gentleman pursues a not-too-fearful lady around the corner of another painted doorway. Fantastic landscapes on the walls open unexpectedly onto vistas of real landscape seen through the windows; the gods and heroes of antiquity come tumbling off the painted walls, and seem to invade the living space itself.

Rural festivals, musical concerts, dances, and dramatic performances, both amateur and professional, enlivened summer evenings at the villas. Audiences and actors or performers trooped down together from the city. All the different groups at these heteroclite gatherings must have looked a little strange to one another. To the city folk the country people must have seemed to be playing parts in a literary pastoral, and vice-versa, the great ladies with their makeup and fancy manners must have looked to the *contadini* like actresses on a stage. Most of all, the actors, with their fixed *commedia dell'arte* roles, must have seemed exotic to everybody. So it was natural, when the whole merry crowd had departed, to bring them back in the form of garden statuary. Garden statuary does not carry a very serious reputation in the art world; but the collections in the Italian villas, scattered deftly along the alleys and over the hedge-enclosed lawns of the formal gardens, are far from the conventional formulas of precast fountain and grotto ware. Rather, they are like a gathering of old friends, whose peculiar features one is delighted to recognize—a guitarist with his ribbons and gaudy hat, a housewife fluffing up the feathers of a chicken, slippered Pantaloon peering over his spectacles. One such delightful collection is to be found at the Villa Widmann at Bagnoli di Sopra near Padua, another is at the Villa La Deliziosa at Montegaldella near Vicenza. Neither of these is a Palladian villa (they were put up in the seventeenth century and added to subsequently); but their statuary is spectacular.

These, then, were the Venetian villas that were said to have brought about the downfall of the Republic by encouraging dissipation and idleness.

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The indictment seems a little extravagant, as charges of decadence tend to be. The villas sheltered, for sure, much frivolity, idleness, indulgence, and what (in more vulgar circles) might be called folderol or hanky-panky; but that sort of thing was not altogether unknown in Venice itself. So far as they were working farms—and that sort of work did go on, to the owner's advantage if not always under his direct impulsion—the villas of the Terrafirma helped to ease Venice's perpetual shortage of food; and that was no small contribution. The longer they discuss the "decadence" of Venice, the less confident the economic historians seem to be that it ever took place at all. Indeed, Venice, being only a city and one limited in its powers of growth, was outcompeted in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by the great national enterprises establishing themselves throughout Europe. And in this situation the Venetian aristocracy did contribute in two important ways to the city's decline—though neither of them relates to the villas. The city's oligarchy vigorously upheld the standards of Venetian industry in the face of cheap competition, and the manufacturers of Venice lost major markets thereby. Also, the governments of Venice failed to change a regressive and inflexible tax system, which by adding nearly thirty percent to the cost of manufactured goods, left Venetian industry at the mercy of European competitors who were, often enough, actually being subsidized by their national governments. In the cutthroat commercial world being created by early capitalist systems, these were errors serious enough to account by themselves for the decline of Venice—even if Napoleon hadn't come along in 1807, and, in the process of turning Europe upside down, crushed the ancient state of Venice.

It is good to know that we don't have to blame the villas for the downfall of Venice, for after the city herself, they represent a major Venetian contribution to the art of civilized living. Even today a surprising number of them continue a vital existence in the teeth of the industrial society that has sprawled (rather appallingly, if you concentrate your attention on it) across the North Italian landscape. Some villas have been obliterated, and some have succumbed to squalor; but others, like the Villa Widmann, remain viable, even prosperous agricultural enterprises; they produce wine and grain in impressive quantities, feed up cattle for market, and make a profit from the fat land of the Adige delta. Occasionally a villa will attract the loving attention of a millionaire like Vittorio Lombardi, who with a sudden flood of money restored in just two years Villa Cordellina and its precious Tiepolo frescoes.

A particularly interesting and attractive experiment is under way at the Villa Loschi-Zileri dal Verme just outside Vicenza. The old barns and servant quarters have been remodeled on the interior into ultramodern apartments; the central structure, with its nobly proportioned and beautifully frescoed *salone,* has been preserved unaltered. The villa stands in a spacious (and, by good fortune, undisturbed) park, within which a couple of small agricultural settlements still maintain some of the old ways. The complex is not far from the original ideal of the villa, which was to combine country living with a measure of urban sophistication. If the plan proves economically viable, elements from it will perhaps be adapted to other villas. There may be an irony in converting old servant and animal shelters to the use of modern *padroni;* but it is a familiar one in America, where old slave quarters and stables are often considered the most fashionable basis for a modern remodeling job. The result seems about as elegant a way of living as can be devised for small families with large but not overwhelming incomes, whose resources and interests can be drawn together to keep alive the few remaining islands of green tranquility and dignity in an otherwise ravaged landscape.

Of course the supreme reward of touring the villas of the Veneto is that when you have done it, you are no more than a step or two from Venice itself. And on the delights of that queenly city there is no need to expand, though memory can't help lingering. □





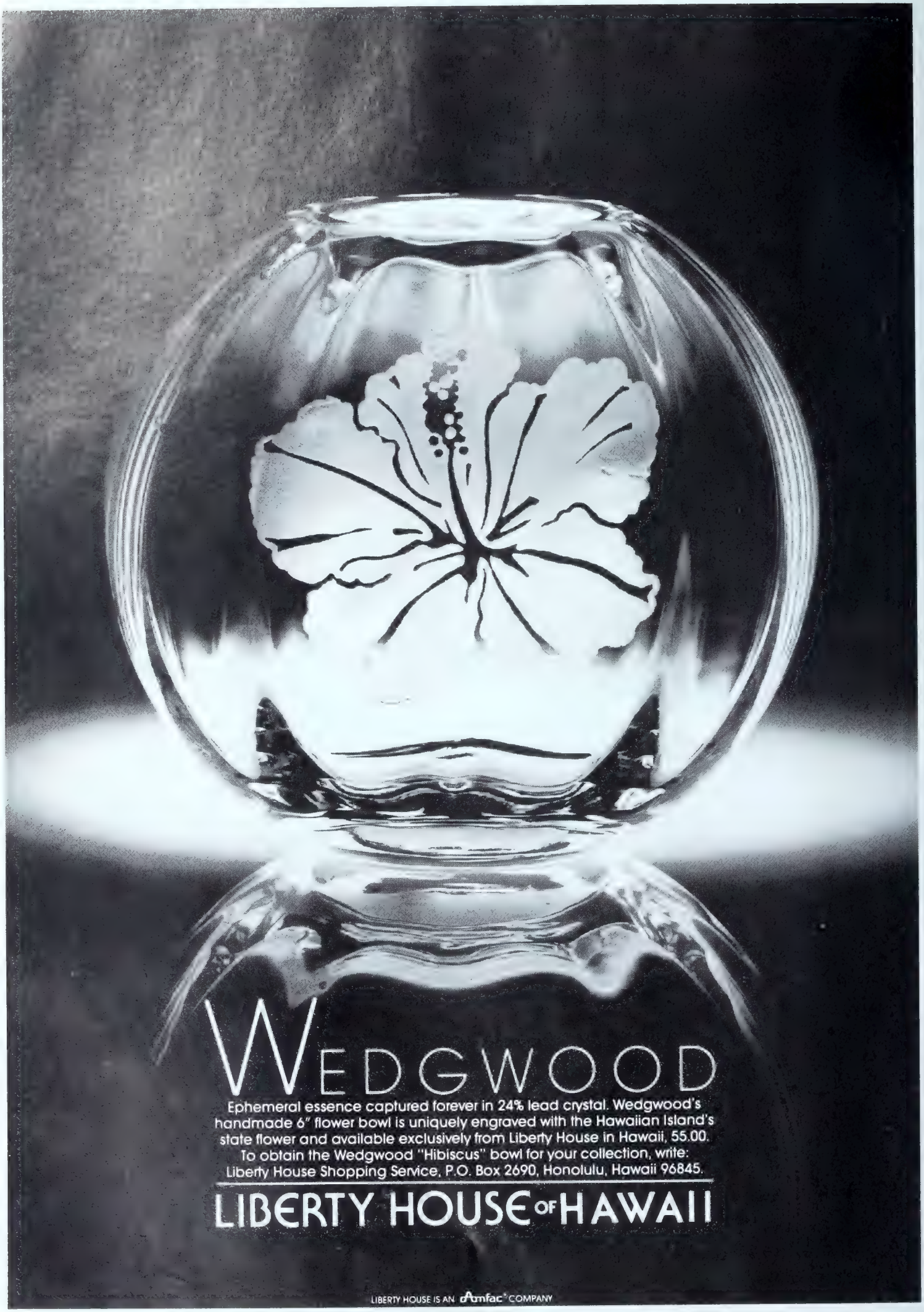
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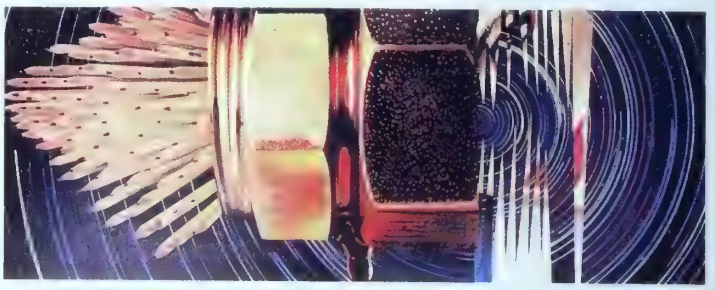
JOURNAL

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ARCHITECTURAL VOLUMES

Artist/architect Barry Holden booked a room to view in his most recent sculpture exhibition, *B. Holden to Diderot,* sponsored by Creative Time in New York. Designed for the Federal Courthouse at Foley Square, the works are inspired by Denis Diderot's *Encyclopédie,* an eighteenth-century compendium of "all human knowlege." Based on visions of industrial futures past, Holden's playfully constructed "viewing pavilions" interpret plates from Diderot. Among the works, a building that constructs and deconstructs itself and, *above,* a reading room made entirely of law books. *David Lisi*



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James Rosenquist, *Whitney Museum, New York, until Sept. 21.*

With their jolting juxtapositions of images, many works of ex–sign painter James Rosenquist are glossy hard-edge versions of old billboards peeled to different layers. Witness *Leaky Ride for Dr. Leaky* (1983), *above.* In the artist's lingo, "Bing—bang!" *Margaret Morse*

THE ART OF LIVING

Giuseppe Maria Crespi and the Emergence of Genre Painting in Italy, *Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Sept. 20–Dec. 7.*

In the early eighteenth century, when Chardin was a mere boy, the genre paintings of Giuseppe Maria Crespi of Bologna were garnering Medici patronage and instigating a democratic turn in Italian taste. Also represented here are Gambarini (*Group of Women Embroidering, right*), Ceruti, Gandolfi, Piazzetta, and Longhi. *M. M.*





ROAD WORK

Picture, if you will, a ghost-gray tableau of a road populated with vehicles of various function and size—motorcycles, a lunar rover, jogging shoes, even the conning tower of a submarine. Up ahead, a signpost, your next stop, *Highway 86,* the centerpiece of the 1986 World Exposition in Vancouver. Designed by SITE, the New York–based architectural firm known for their radical deconstructions, the sculpture poses a bold—and eerie—comment on Expo's theme of transportation and communication. *D. L.*

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FAMILY TIES

Domestic Bliss: Family Life in American Painting, 1840–1910, *The Margaret Woodbury Strong Museum, Rochester, Sept. 6–Nov. 30.*

The nearly ninety examples of American genre painting in this charming show (*left,* Matteson's *Returning Home*) plumb our emotional heartland. Eastman Johnson, Thomas Eakins, and other luminaries of American lares and penates are on hand. Next year the show visits the Terra Museum in Chicago.



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THYSSEN TREASURES

Goya in Spanish Private Collections *and* **Gold and Silver Treasures from the Hermitage,** *Villa Favorita, Lugano, through Oct. 15 and Nov. 2, respectively.*

Baron Heinrich Thyssen-Bornemisza is making available not only the gallery of his Swiss villa but also some of its private rooms for two shows of rarely seen masterworks. The great and various Goya is canvased in style—fifty paintings strong, among them his portrait of Count Fernán-Núñez, *above.* In addition, 150 works of art in gold and silver, and jewelry, will get their first airing in the West. From a neoclassic table in steel and gilt and a Fabergé grenadier's cup to a lapis lazuli cameo, *below,* from sixteenth-century Italy, there's sparkle plenty. *M. M.*



THE GETTY IS GOOD

Fellows and other scholars at the newly formed Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities in Santa Monica are finding they can study up on the *Carceri* of Piranesi while staring at the Pacific pleasantly incarcerated in these temporary headquarters. In six or so years, the Center moves to the expansive new Fine Arts Complex being designed by Richard Meier in the Brentwood section of Los Angeles. In the meantime two floors of a typical spec office building have been given an industrial-strength chic by two young San Francisco architects, Mark Mack and his former partner Andrew Batey, who both, incidentally, were "runners-up" for the Meier commission. The designers have used sturdy materials familiar in farmyards and warehouses to contrast with (and sometimes literally cut through, as in the library) ordinary vinyl flooring and acoustical tile. Tough materials like concrete block are combined with elegant ashwood braces for counters, desks, and shelves—a mixture of the sybaritic and the profane which yet allows the work ethic to thrive.

Suzanne Stephens



TIM STREET-PORTER





Artful meets office spec in library, *top,* or in the reading room, *above. Left:* Ash and deerhide "Getty Chair."



INSIDER INFORMATION

Robert Rasely: Fantasy Painting, *Schmidt-Bingham Gallery, New York, through Oct. 4.*

A visual journey through Robert Rasely's painted rooms is not unlike a voyage through the subconscious—where disparate, often grotesque parts compose an exquisitely crafted whole. Although this is his first New York appearance, his participation in group shows and galleries across the country has already marked Rasely as a bright young talent. His miniature glazed oil-on-panel renderings of arcane symbols and trompe-l'oeil surfaces recall the frieze paintings and Mediterranean light of the Italian Renaissance with surrealistic overtones. *Above: Meet Me Tonight in Dreamland.* *D.L.*



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FLYING FISH ON BAXTER'S ROAD

Eating one's way through Barbados

By Calvin Trillin



FRANK MAJORE

"Did you say, 'eat in the hotel'?" I asked. There was always a chance that I had misunderstood, although not much of one. My wife, who under ordinary circumstances wouldn't think of eating dinner in a hotel dining room, has an unshakable belief that the hotel is the only place to have your first meal after a day spent traveling to a foreign country. I pointed out that the journey we had just made, from New York to Barbados, was approximately the same distance as a trip from New York to Utah, and that what we were about to do was therefore the equivalent of having dinner in the dining room of the Salt Lake City Ramada Inn. I also pointed out that Barbados was so strongly influenced by the English, who ruled it for three centuries, that it is sometimes known as Little England—meaning that dinner at a Barbados hotel was likely to consist of any number of formally served courses, each of which could make one yearn for the Ramada Inn's Soup 'n' Sandwich Special. I didn't expect my wife's plans to be affected in the least by those arguments. The custom of eating in the hotel on the night of our arrival is observed by my wife as if she were observing a sacrament central to some religion—a religion that has never been identified but must have something to do with mortification of the flesh.

It happened to be the hotel's night for a buffet, and as we approached the food that had been laid out on the buffet tables it occurred to me that if the sons of lieutenant colonels in the Coldstream Guards had bar mitzvahs this is what the reception spread would look like. The display reflected the extraordinary care the English have always taken over the appearance of special-occasion victuals; their interest in food tends to peak just before the eating. There were slices of cold salmon that had been cut into fish shapes and given eyes made out of a material that could be eaten, although, like the salmon itself, not tasted. There were several ice sculptures—confirming my impression that the number of English sculptors on the international art scene is always limited by the fact that so many of them are kept busy fashioning sea bass out of ice. There was roast beef and Yorkshire pudding and creamed cauliflower and Brussels sprouts. I stopped in front of the Brussels sprouts and stared at them for a while. "The English have a lot to answer for," I said to my wife. It's amazing to me that of all the issues that brought colonial people out in the street during the long hegemony of the British Empire, nobody ever rebelled against Brussels sprouts. Or maybe somebody did. Maybe in those old newsreel clips that show hordes of chanting demonstrators rushing through the streets in the days before independence what they are actually chanting is not "British go home!" or "Down with the Raj!" but "No more Brussels sprouts!"

Several years ago, when I revealed publicly that I often daydream of what life in the Caribbean would be like if there had ever been an Italian West Indies—the I.W.I. vacation spot I envision, a lush volcanic island whose steep hills are green with garlic plants, is called Santo Prosciutto—I just about convinced myself that the British might respond by giving Italy, say, Tortola. ("No, please, we want you to have it. The soil's no good for growing overcooked cabbage anyhow.") When it comes to eating in the Caribbean, I seem to be afflicted with an optimism that flies in the face of personal experience. I learned long ago that restaurants on Caribbean islands face handicaps that go beyond what I have come to think of as the British Problem. Even on some French islands—St. Martin, for instance—vir-



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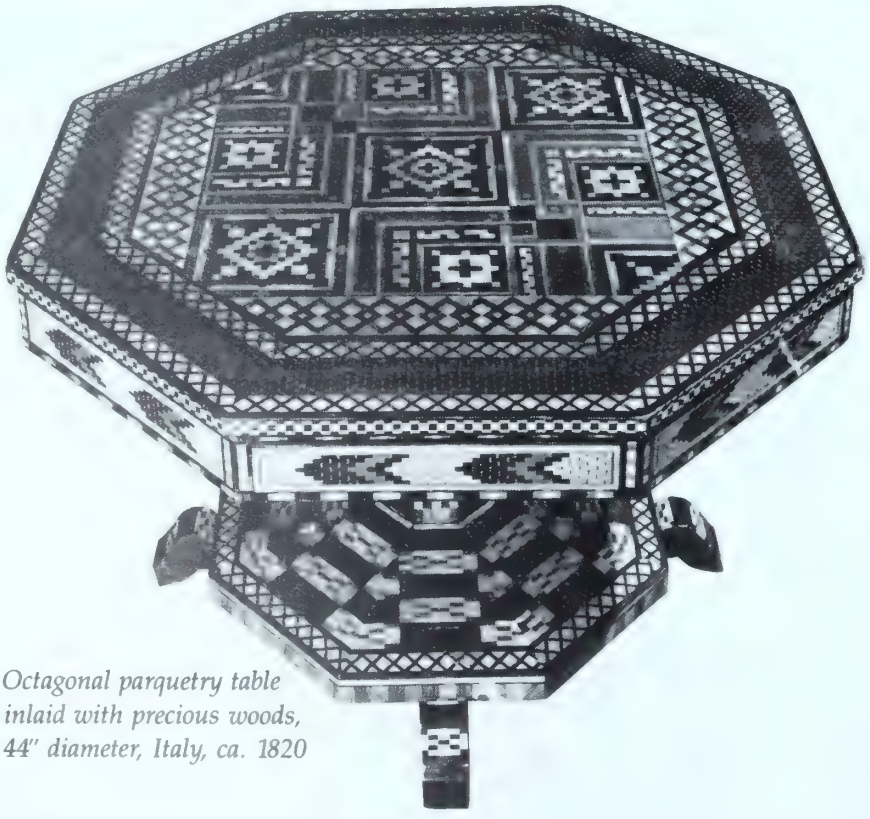
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tually everything served in a restaurant has to be imported, meaning that the restaurant's most important creative employee may not be the chef in the kitchen but the customs broker in San Juan. Still, I always arrive for my first visit on a Caribbean island confident that once I have put the mandatory hotel meal behind me I am going to find something decent to eat.

I won't say that my confidence has never been justified. It was justified once. On Martinique, what Creole cooks did with the local creatures inspired me to attempt a sonnet to the sea urchin—a task that must be a lot easier in French than in English. As my wife has often pointed out, though, even my most frenzied efforts—the efforts I made a few years ago while we were on St. Thomas, for instance—tend not to be fruitful. On St. Thomas, I spent a while investigating the admittedly faint possibility that some Danish chef, known equally for his stubbornness and his brilliance, had remained after Denmark sold out in 1917 and was still plying his trade in a restaurant that was virtually unknown on the island (because he refused to print his menu in English) but attracted knowing gourmets from Copenhagen. That turned out not to be the case. Then I launched a search premised on the likelihood that people native to St. Thomas had perfected some stunning dish of their own based on the local fauna—a search that eventually led me to a tiny Charlotte Amalie lunch counter that had as its daily special something called Bullfoot Soup.

"Well, I'm sure at least that it was authentic," I said at the time, while reporting the experience to my wife. "It tasted pretty much the way you'd imagine something called Bullfoot Soup tasting."

My wife's point is, of course, that this desperate search negates the reason for coming to the Caribbean in the first place—relaxation. I admitted long ago that I have been among those men the cartoonists show sitting on a Caribbean beach listening to their wives telling them to relax. The difference is that the others are worried about the business they were supposed to have left behind—they are popping up from the sand every five minutes to try to get a call through to the office concerning one last thought on the Perkins ac-



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C.



E.



D.



F.

count; they are shouting at the beach-boy for working at a place that does not receive *The Wall Street Journal* on the day it's printed—and I am tending to the business at hand.

In Barbados, I had used the ride from the airport to the hotel to scan the horizon for land that was planted in something more immediately useful than sugar cane, and to question the driver closely about where he ate when he happened to find himself in Bridgetown, the capital, around lunchtime. I thought I had reason for optimism. Barbados, after all, is noted for its use of a local fish; the motto promoted by its tourist office is "Land of the Flying Fish." I have been to Caribbean islands whose motto should be "Land of the Frozen Fillet." In New York, we had been told by someone who lived in Barbados until recently that Barbadians—or Bajans, as they are often called—have in recent years moved away from the traditions of Little England toward a more Caribbean culture of their own. I had read in a guidebook that even hotels have become more willing to put Bajan specialties like fishballs or pepper-pot on their menus. One of the restaurant advertisements I saw while thumbing through the local paper during our first day on the beach was for a place that specialized in what is described as "Nu Bajan Cuisine."

"This is a good sign," I said, showing the advertisement to my wife. "If there's a new Bajan cuisine, it stands to reason that there must be an old Bajan cuisine." I couldn't imagine, for instance, St. Thomas having a new Thomian cuisine—unless it consisted of a large white plate upon which was a perfect strawberry, some sliced kiwi, and, in the center, a single bullfoot. I told my wife that I had high hopes. The taxi driver who brought us from the airport had given me a tip on a Bridgetown place where I might find Bajan specialties like peas-and-rice and cou-cou—a sort of pudding made out of cornmeal and okra. We had the name of a hotel on the Atlantic shore that specialized in a Bajan buffet. I had been told about a street in Bridgetown called Baxter's Road, where Bajans go late at night to eat and drink in small bars or to buy fried fish from women who cook over kettles of embers right on the street. I admitted to my wife that I was a bit

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worried about being able to stay up late enough to make it to Baxter's Road.

"Couldn't you just relax?" she said.

"It's hard," I said. "Brussels sprouts make me jumpy."

"Well, this was educational," I said, after we had finished the Bajan buffet at the Atlantic shore hotel. "Although I'm not sure that's the highest compliment I've ever given a meal." The Atlantic coast of Barbados is spectacular—a largely undeveloped stretch of beach with huge rock formations and a powerful surf. Just below the hotel, fishermen were bringing in their day's catch of flying fish. The buffet included a number of local specialties—spinach cakes, pumpkin fritters, peas-and-rice, pickled bananas—along with a few surprises, like chow mein. The educational aspect was that each dish had in front of it a neatly printed identification sign. Although the signs did not include the proper Latin name for, say, pickled bananas (*Ananum piclum*), it was a bit like wandering around a well-marked botanical garden with a plate in your hand.

By then, I had found quite a bit to eat in Barbados that was not Brussels sprouts. I had eaten some first-rate fried dorado, a fish the Bajans refer to as dolphin. At the taxi driver's place in Bridgetown, I had been introduced to a flying-fish cutter—a cutter being a sandwich made on a high, squarish roll. At the Cheapside public market—a place that looked like my vision of a West African market, with women in print dresses sitting behind displays of odd-looking root vegetables or strolling down the long aisles between the stalls with baskets of breadfruit on their heads—I sampled a remarkable variety of spicy fishballs from tiny lunch stands with names like Nic's Snackette. I had eaten what I took to be fried squid in a dish listed on the menu of a little beach bar as "Scuttle à la Earlene (Chef's Delight)." I had eaten a noted Bajan dish called pudding and souse, which is made from a lot of little-used pig parts that it probably wouldn't hurt to waste. Still, I thought I had to go to Baxter's Road, which, I had been told, didn't start bustling until midnight. After a day in the sun, it's not easy to stay up until midnight, particularly when someone keeps telling you to relax.

Bajans love to stay up late. I suppose part of the entertainment on Baxter's Road is speculating on where the other celebrants were before they decided to start eating chicken at three in the morning. Judging from the local paper, a lot of them were dancing. On the Friday I decided to go to Baxter's Road, the paper carried a page or two of advertisements for dances available to anyone willing to pay an admission charge of five dollars Barbadian—about two-fifty American. Each ad showed a picture of the dance's organizer, who was identified not simply by name but by nickname and sometimes by place of work or automobile license-plate number—so that the invitation might come from "Mr. Keith Sandiford (known as Nobby)" or "Miss Yvette Yearwood (known as Sugary)" or "Mr. Sylvan Greenidge (known as Nat Cole)" or "Mr. Edgar McClean (better known as Sheriff), bus driver of Transport Board on Route 22A." Nobby and Nat Cole and Sugary and Sheriff and the rest were presumably still on the dance floor when I arrived at Baxter's Road, because I had decided that if I didn't start out by ten I might not start out at all.

Baxter's Road is a collection of small bars and restaurants and stores, most of which are open only at night. The architecture is a rickety version of that diminutive Caribbean style that appears to be based on telling the builder to do everything in three-fifths scale. The establishments on Baxter's Road have names like Kool Hour Bar & Restaurant and Tip Top Restaurant & Bar and John's Night Cap. The light comes mainly from the bars and restaurants, most of which are completely open to the street. The smell of smoke and spices drift down from the top of the road, where a dozen or so women stand on the pavement frying fish over wood fires and competing loudly for customers. The total effect can make a visitor feel for a moment that he has wandered onto a set for *Porgy and Bess*.

I was there by myself, reconnoitering. If Baxter's Road fulfilled my expectations, I was planning to bring my




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wife back the next night. I made my headquarters in Enid's Bar, a place recommended to me for its fried chicken. It turned out to be a tiny room with a bar and three tables and a large sign that read PLEASE DO NOT PUT YOUR FOOT ON THE CHAIR OR SIT ON TABLE. A large, cheerful woman named Shirley was presiding, opening the display case on the bar now and then as someone walked in off the street and asked for a flying-fish cutter or some cold chicken necks or pudding and souse or a bottle of beer or a type of coconut roll that is called, ominously, a lead pipe. The only other customer at the bar at that hour was an American named Glenn who had lived in Barbados for ten years. He acted as a sort of interpreter, since Shirley's English was delivered in such a thick Bajan accent that I sometimes didn't understand her. At one point in the evening, for instance, I returned from taking a turn of the street and asked Shirley if she knew what was in what seemed to be the specialty of a place called the Pink Star—a huge loaf called a one-fifty, after its price. When she answered, I turned to Glenn and said, "Did she say, 'They boils up livers and gizzards and they put them in there'?"

Glenn nodded. "I'm afraid so," he said.

I decided that I was too full for a one-fifty. I had, after all, already sampled some spectacular fried fish at the top of the road, and I had eaten a few chicken livers, and I had just asked Shirley if she would mind frying some chicken for me, even though Nobby and Nat Cole and the rest of the fried-chicken customers were nowhere in sight. When she put the chicken in front of me, maybe twenty minutes later, she watched me eat a few bites and then asked what I thought.

"I think I'll be back here with my wife tomorrow night," I said.

Shirley had told me that, even though there are few early evening customers, the fish hawkers set up their operations around eight and she had been known to begin frying chicken soon after she opened the doors, at nine. We were at Enid's the next night when it opened. Before that, we had stopped at the fish-friers for some fried dolphin, served in a paper bag. My wife acknowledged that it was about the finest piece of fried fish she had ever eaten. "What are these spices?" she asked the woman who had sold it to us.

The woman laughed. "That's my little secret, dearie," she said.

The chicken at Enid's was splendid—panfried slowly in the spicy batter Bajans like. My wife finished it off with dispatch—an impressive performance considering the fact she had passed some of the frying time polishing off some warmed-up chicken gizzards as an appetizer. When she finished, she sat back satisfied—although resisting any temptation she might have had to put her foot on the chair in front of her. I also felt satisfied. The search had been worth the effort. I was, in fact, almost relaxed. Then I began to consider the possibility that I had not really looked hard enough on St. Thomas. □

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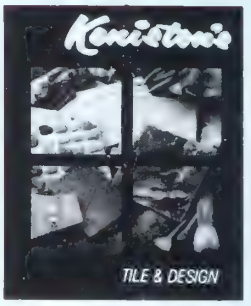


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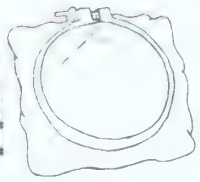
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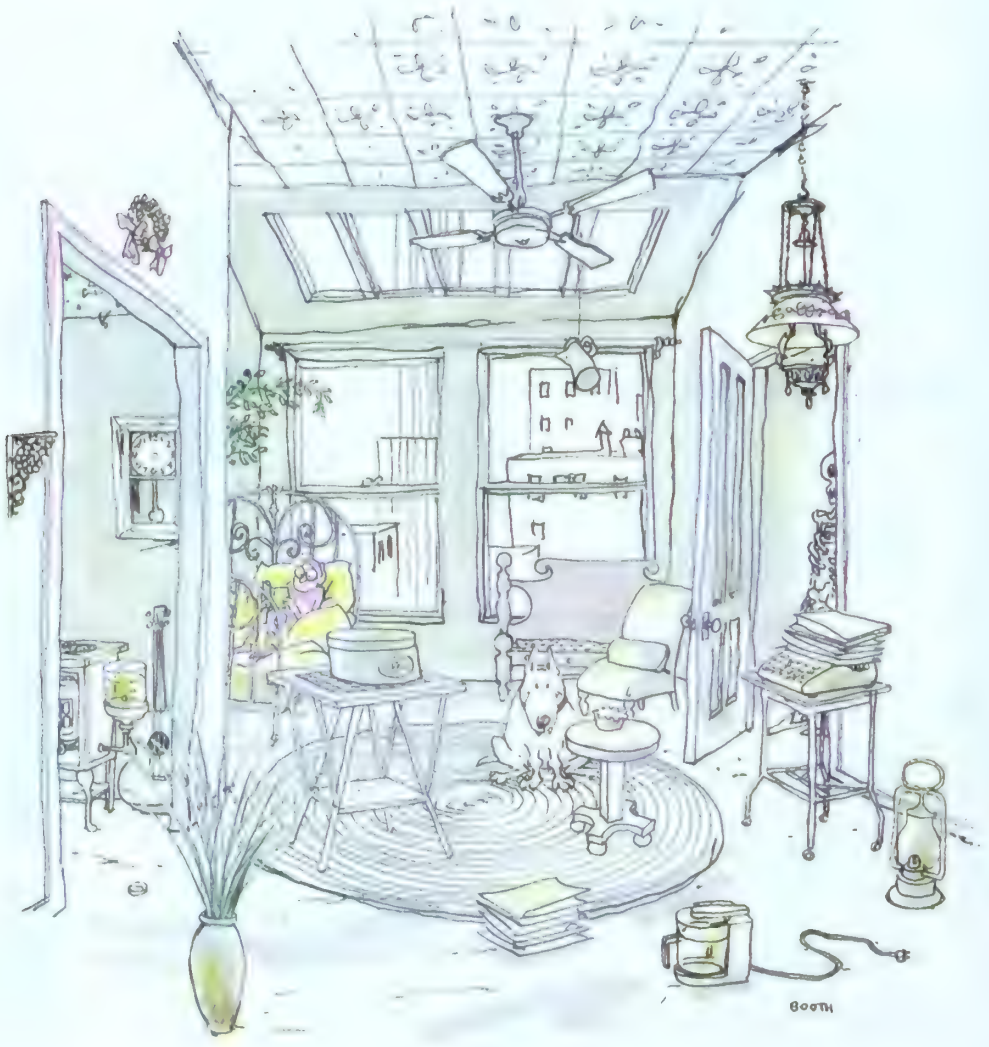
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A DECORATOR'S DIARY

By Prudence Crowther



In September 1985, Molly Teasedale, a New York interior designer, agreed to make over a small, one-bedroom apartment in a sixth-floor walk-up in Greenwich Village. She kept a diary of her progress from the beginning consultation until the client, P (not her real initial), thought the job was satisfactorily completed.

"People who read the 'Home' section of *The New York Times* begin to think the only difference between a tiny apartment and a big house is the number of illusions the decorator can come up with. It's hard to overcome that degree of optimism," said Miss Teasedale.

Her client remarked: "For a long time I had no problem with the tenement look—I thought it made me seem more honest and winsome. That was when it still behooved a woman to appear to need rescuing, and believe me, I had it down. Since the renovation, I give off a less vagrant scent, and not surprisingly I'm attracting a better cut of acquaintance."

"In trying to have her apartment not look like a nest, she came close to having it look like a stable," Molly offered. "She was afraid of being labeled, even as pro-antimacassar. It's a common anxiety. If you succumb to a style, people have something concrete to judge you by—sometimes literally. I had a client who invested in an asphalt sitting area and lost all her friends. It worked for her—that's what she wanted."

"Molly was able to accommodate my fears by giving me a lot of variables," P said. "I can switch the function of things, move them around. There are open spaces where I can create little still lifes of objects that comment on—sometimes cruelly—the more fixed arrangements. This gives me the freedom I need."

The road was not always the shortest distance between two points, but as Teasedale's diary shows, the final result was gratifying to both client and designer.

February 12

I have a message to call a friend of a former client, and when I do, I get her answering machine—a dog snarling, followed by a beep. Later on, we connect. She's been left a small sum by her grandmother and would like to spend it on a renovation. A writer in her mid-thirties who lives modestly, she seems uneasy about forfeiting the spontaneous quality she claims the place now has.

February 25

Saw the apartment today. The building is from the forties—brick, with two stone rats on either side of the stoop, on a nice enough street in the Village—housing a mix of old and young singles and a few families. Strains of a man singing "You'll Do It My Way," and the hallways smell of garlic.

The apartment itself is perfect for someone with agoraphobia, but cheerful withal: since the demise of the Women's House of Detention behind the Jefferson Market Library, the client has a view of the Empire State Building and points northeast.

The living-room ceiling is painted a deep blue and peeling horribly. P thinks it looks like a constantly opening Advent calendar and is attached to it—this is always the case with whatev-



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The living-room ceiling is painted a deep blue and peeling horribly. P thinks it looks like a constantly opening Advent calendar and is attached to it

er feature most makes the designer's face burn. The kitchen is reasonably large; the bedroom tiny, with one built-in closet made smaller by the presence of a skeleton.

A long skinny hallway is hung with memorabilia, mostly pictures of P's friends and heroes. A receipt for two shillings given by her great-grandfather in 1879 to the suffrage movement in England; a photograph of Man o' War's death mask. Apparently artless bunches of books and papers sprout from every surface. There is neither television nor stereo, and the main appliance is a gas-powered salad-tosser designed by my client's father.

Overall, the best you could say is that the place has the courage of its humility.

February 28

A good client has a few basic priorities and confidence in the designer's ability to respect them. Mine uses a lot of self-canceling gestures, but I gather her concern is to combine a more or less permanent work space with an entertainment area all within the main room, without its being too cluttered. She needs more closet space, and wants the apartment to look undecorated. I asked if she was looking for an architectural statement, and she said she didn't care, as long as the statement wasn't "Why don't you go back where you came from."

March 14

After giving the situation some thought, I called P and broached the subject of a budget. She said she couldn't go a cent over her inheritance—$20,000. Peanuts, but given her sensibilities I may be able to get away with shortcuts that a fussier client wouldn't tolerate.

March 25

I've been playing around with some drawings and have a few ideas. The key is to find some radical way of creating more space so as to accommodate both a study and living area, without having to resort to a lot of reversible furniture. I also propose gutting the bathroom and adding that space to the kitchen, building a simple shower/privy on the fire escape. And I can convert the old tub into a daybed by filling it up with silk pillows and bolsters.

The foyer ceiling will be dropped, forcing the guests to creep in. By the time they reach the living room, it'll seem expansive and light.

April 1

My first reckoning: I run the plans by my contractor, Louis Domani. He gives me estimates I can live with on everything but refinishing the walls, which he quotes at somewhere between $9,000–$40,000. I tell him this is too wide a range. In lieu of costly replastering, he suggests simply making the damage uniform: there's so much trompe-l'oeil goofing now, why not genuinely distressed surfaces? The effect is of antique, crumbling frescoes: in other words, large notes of classicism in a giant fugue of post-modernist squalor.

April 22

D-Day. After I coax P through my working drawings, I'm relieved to see she's still keen. As I'm $6,000 over budget, she whittles away some of the extras, vetoing my idea of giving each book its own glass niche in the wall. I point out how this dramatizes their separateness as objects, like the urns in Japanese catacombs, but she says that's exactly what she finds most grotesque.

May 3

Demolition work began today, and you can't breathe for the plaster dust. One of the crew got carried away wrecking the bathroom wall and creamed the

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foreman with his sledge. Hell of a note, but at least he's offered to let my client oversee the job herself until he returns from the hospital. They're not always that responsible.

Even so, P was put out, and although I argued for the use of raw materials in nontraditional ways, she balked at the set of anthracite footstools I was pushing.

May 20

Things are moving along nicely. The new space is emerging and even P has said she can see where it'll be a solid antidesign statement. She's off to California for two weeks, and I'm hoping we can make some time while she's gone.

June 19

P has brought back a replica of a thirteenth-century choir stall from the souvenir shop at San Simeon, which she'd like to deploy in the library/study. With a set of industrial casters I think I can make it into a typing cubicle; enough whimsy to gag a Hearst, but I can't very well make her take it back.

July 6

Two steps forward, one back. I'd figured on setting off the dining part of the expanded kitchen by creating a sort of tension zone—a freestanding cut-glass countertop set in acrylic amber. Now that it's built, P says there's too much tension; she keeps cutting herself while serving, and it shows. The points will have to be sanded down by hand—time-consuming and costly.

The foyer ceiling will be dropped, forcing the guests to creep in

July 17

We're nearly on schedule, and I've drawn up a punch list for Louis—when something's unfinished, I punch him. At this stage, contractors are already signing on for new jobs, and getting them to finish yours is like Zeno's paradox.

August 1

Although my client has a nice old iron bedstead, it's really too big for the bedroom. A bit of minimalist finesse is needed here, but what? A vertical hammock? Perhaps.

When you finally get serious with these old tenements, there comes a day when the roaches suddenly realize they can't go home again because the access has been spackled over. Sad.

August 31

I drop in on P for a final verdict. She and her friend R are busy recovering a little fifties boomerang sofa with a brushed nylon slip. R is generous, saying the place is "crisp without being rigid." P agrees. "It's not exactly *Brideshead*, but it's a lot less like *Bleak House*."

On my way out of the building, I smile scrutably: the hallways no longer smell like garlic, and word has it the landlord is giving everyone rebates. □



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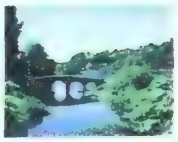
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LIBERATING THE LANDSCAPE

Lancelot "Capability" Brown and the gardening revolution in eighteenth-century England

By Michael Charlesworth



Although the various forms of art of the eighteenth century in England are widely acknowledged to be significantly interconnected, the landscape gardening of Capability Brown remains somewhat resistant to specific comparisons. His landscapes are products of extreme professionalism by a man somewhat inarticulate about his aims. One way to throw further light on his purposes and their connection with the other arts is to examine the profound change he brought over landscape gardening.

The seemingly natural gardens which became established in England from 1720 to 1750 used temples, statues, and seats to provide another dimension to the visitor's pleasure in the garden. These pieces of garden architecture and ornament, sometimes embellished with suitable inscriptions, were set out to inspire in the visitor an association of thoughts or a mood suitable for a particular part of the garden. Very often, out of the individual parts, a coherent sequence of associated meanings was built up. It was a means of adding the element of intellectual excitement to the sensual enjoyment of the garden.

Thus, at Stourhead, soon after leaving the temple known as the Pantheon, the visitor comes to a place where the path divides, and has to make a crucial decision. One path, level and broad, leads along the margin of the lake and eventually back to the village; the other, leaving the main path, climbs steeply and tortuously up an artificial rocky hillside. Many visitors of course choose the easy path; those who turn uphill are rewarded by reaching the temple of Apollo (otherwise missed) and a wonderful panoramic view of the garden. Moreover, the alert visitor has been prepared for this moment of decision.



In the picture gallery of Stourhead House hangs a painting by Nicolas Poussin, *Hercules at the Crossroads,* depicting the critical moment when the young Hercules chose to follow the path of Virtue (depicted as a young woman pointing energetically up a rocky hillside) rather than that of Vice (whose path is flat and easy). A reminder of this motif occurs in the garden, where a statue of Hercules is to be found in the Pantheon, flanked by the statues of two women.

Below: The vista from Sledmere House exemplifies the noble simplicity of Brown's designs. *Above* and *right:* Views of Stourhead Lake with the Pantheon in the distance. In view at right, the Bristol Cross.



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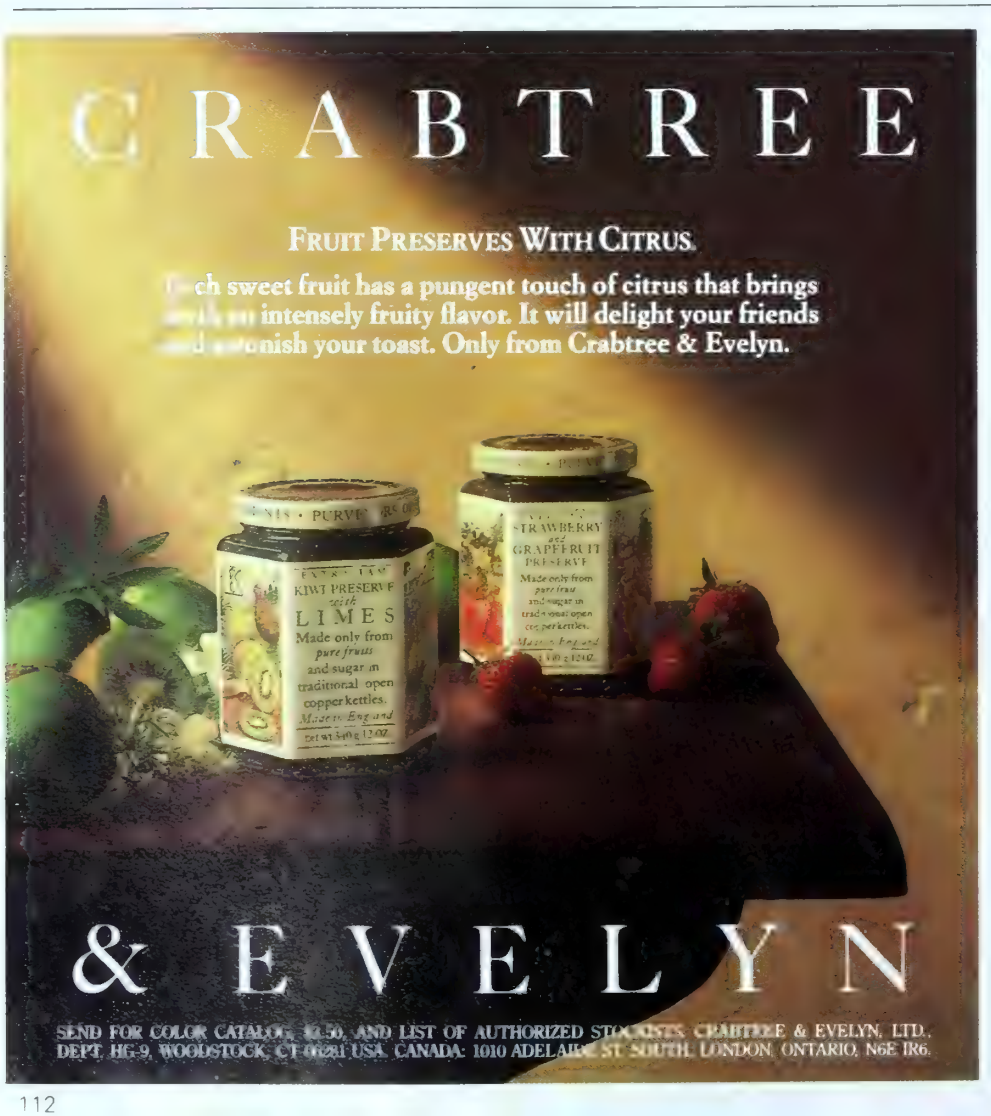
The visitor on the garden path is therefore taken into the myth by being asked to make the Choice of Hercules, translated into the terms of gardening. Not only has his enjoyment of the garden been affected, but he has been encouraged in a typically witty eighteenth-century way to think about moral choice. Such references to the mythic past recur in visual or literary ways. The most important at Stourhead are the references to the journey of Aeneas from the sack of Troy to the founding of Rome. And behind all, perhaps, are the landscape paintings of Claude Lorrain: the center of the garden is an empty space of light and air above the lake, like the empty space filled with light at the center of his paintings.

The approach to gardening we have briefly examined at Stourhead has a significance even wider than the world of gardening. The use of an allusion, or series of allusions, to the remote past, to suggest another borrowed meaning more timeless and resonant than the immediate one, was the essence of Augustan artistic method. Therefore the same techniques of interpretation apply to the "reading" of poems, novels, paintings, and gardens. In novels, the method is used by Fielding, Richardson, Smollett, and Sterne; it determines the form of Pope's poetry and informs Dryden's; in painting, Hogarth uses this approach; it determines the language of Palladian architecture; and for a brief period it flourished in and shaped English landscape gardening. Then, quite suddenly, in all these arts, in the middle years of the century, it died.

In landscape gardening this disappearance of the characteristic Augustan mode meant that the varied, intellectual, and classically loyal poetic gardens, such as Rousham, Stourhead, Studley Royal, and those at Castle Howard and Stowe, were no longer made. Gardens based on some sort of readable symbolism continued to be made, such as Amesbury Abbey, in Wiltshire, where clumps of trees were planted after 1805 in the disposition of the ships at the Battle of Trafalgar, but they do not resemble the Augustan poetic garden. At the same time many other styles of the first half of the century, promoted by Bridgeman, Switzer, Batty Langley, and others, also ceased. One kind of garden dominated: that associated with Capability Brown. In his work Claude Lorrain is still a perceptible influence, but otherwise the contrast with the mode of the earlier gardens is very striking.

The new style was simple and spare and lacked a concealed articulate structure of meaning. Brown's materials were huge expanses of grass, trees, lakes, and only a very few garden buildings (Sledmere, in Yorkshire, has four in two thousand acres: Stowe had fifty-three in four hundred acres). His immediate aim was an aesthetic design based on the colors blue, green, and white. The result, as at Sledmere, is a dignified landscape of great trees arranged in groves or singly on extensive lawns, and an impression of great beauty, magnificence, peace, and stillness: ultimately, despite its great size, a more private place than the classical landscape of Stourhead, which taps the common property of shared knowledge, and where one follows a journey which was first made long before in the legendary past. At Sledmere even the house has been reduced in importance to just another visual incident in the landscape. The ubiquitous popularity of Brown and his impact on the face of England, planting more trees and making more lakes than anyone before or since, provoke the question, why did this disappearance of the old and this dominance by one style happen?

If we turn to the other art forms of the century we find that in this mid-period they all begin to seek out a different audience. Both Fielding and Richardson produced very different novels after 1750. *Amelia* and *Sir Charles Grandison* are written in a much more simple, direct style than their predecessors. It is as though both authors began to doubt the existence of an educated, initiated audience capable of reading the Augustan novel. Instead they directed their efforts to the middle classes, who would only be embarrassed by some hidden statement the meaning of which was not immediately apparent to them. For





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whatever reason this happened, it proved to be the way ahead for the novel. Hogarth went even further down the social scale. He had sought out a new audience as early as 1747. In that year appeared his progress *Industry and Idleness,* in which he tried to communicate with the type of apprentices who were the subjects of his pictures. In poetry, by 1750 Pope and Thomson were dead and poetry had begun to cease to be a statement about public life in the way Pope's and Dryden's satires had been. Instead, through Collins and Gray, it became a means of expression of private concerns.

So the midpoint of the eighteenth century was a time when the several arts sought out their individual audiences. There was a fragmentation of consensus. Landscape gardening was the pursuit of the rich, and Brown's style made it even more exclusively so. He was expensive, and his style of landscape gardening was not for the middle classes. Men of limited means, as Philip Southcote at Woburn Farm and Shenstone at the Leasowes had proved, could create Augustan gardens: they could not attempt Brown's style. The upper classes, perhaps because they saw the other arts becoming less exclusively their concern, but also for a variety of other reasons, sought a sense of communal identity; a landscape by Brown was one of the ways they could satisfy this search.

By the 1750s the earlier garden layouts were the objects of ridicule. The periodical *The World,* in 1753, criticizes the taste, derived from Hogarth and William Kent, for the serpentine line. Act Two, Scene Two of the play *The Clandestine Marriage* by David Garrick and George Colman Sr. (1766) contains a farcical description of an Augustan garden, with this expostulation by its owner, Mr. Sterling: "Ay, here's none of your straight lines here; but all taste; zigzag, crinkum-crankum, in and out, right and left, to and again; twisting and turning like a worm, my lord." Later the same character explains why he built a churchless steeple a field or two off: "One must always have a church, or an obelisk, or something to terminate the prospect, you know. That's a rule in taste, my lord." This was on the mark. Batty Langley's 4th General Direction for laying out gardens, in *New Principles of Gardening* (1728), was "that all such walks whose views cannot be extended, terminate in Woods, Forests, misshapen Rocks, strange Precipices, Mountains, old Ruins, grand Buildings, etc." These were the sort of excesses to which an Augustan garden without a meaning that could be interpreted in words, or a poetic garden bereft of poetic content, could become susceptible; and are only compounded by Langley's suggestion that such desirable features could be counterfeited on giant canvases if they were absent in nature. There is also the cruelty of a social division behind the mockery of *The Clandestine Marriage:* Mr. Sterling is a retired merchant, and thus neither educated nor upper class; an aristocrat would not want to be associated with any of his tastes.

Brown's landscapes were expensive partly because they were big. At Sledmere the landscaped park covered two thousand acres, while Blenheim and Chatsworth were even bigger. The distinctions between garden, countryside, and woodland were removed. Brown was the first gardener in England who could handle such a huge expanse and make it all one unified design. This only became possible through the increasing number of Acts of Parliament required to enclose common land and divert the courses of roads. They continued throughout the century, making possible the unification of scattered estates and holdings and enabling large-scale improvement of agricultural land which increased the amount of money coming to the owners of estates. The park at Sledmere, huge though it is, represented only about seven percent of the estate. Contrast this with the Leasowes, where the whole farm of 250 acres became the landscape garden!

Of the elements so characteristic of Brown's landscapes—smooth rolling turf carrying groups of trees, a lake, an encircling belt of woodland—none was his own invention. William Kent had used clumps of trees in his plan for Holkham. At Castle Howard and at Wentworth Castle, both in Yorkshire,

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lakes had been formed to imitate rivers, their ends hidden by trees in the way Brown was to insist on later. The advancing and receding belts of trees which overhung the Elysian Fields and the Grecian Valley at Stowe provided the form of Brown's encircling belt which enclosed and controlled the landscape. The innovation which set Brown's work apart from what had gone before was the freedom with which Brown used these elements, and for this freedom there is an analogue in architecture.

Through the publication in the 1750s of reports and drawings of classical ruins in Italy, modern Yugoslavia, and Syria, British civilization had its first direct contact with classical architecture since the forgotten days of Roman rule. The major conceptual discovery so brilliantly exploited by Robert Adam was that classical architects had worked with far greater freedom than the statements of Vitruvius, filtered in a prescriptive manner through Palladio and the English Palladianism then dominant, would have allowed. Just as neoclassical country-house architecture of the Adam type was generally smoother and flatter in outline than previous styles, so were Brown's landscapes—as his critics were eventually to point out.

It is generally accepted that Brown was trying as much as Augustan gardeners to create a classical landscape: but he did so not by attempting to recreate the gardens of Roman villas or the landscapes of antiquity depicted by the painters of the late Renaissance, but by trying to conjure up the spirit of Arcadia. This, too, was an important part of his appeal to potential customers. He could offer them the ideal countryside—a parcel of Arcadia around their houses, secure from the outside world behind the encircling belt of woodland. Horace Walpole realized this when he wrote about William Kent the otherwise puzzling statement, "We owe the restoration of Greece . . . to his skill in landscape." Walpole's point was that Brown, the dominant style at the time he was writing, had learned from Kent the Arcadian scenery of lawns and groves and apparent randomness.

In addition to the freedom Brown enjoyed, there is another important way in which freedom was connected with his landscapes. Before the great change in gardening taste, which he largely caused, there was, in the majority of cases, an emphasis on the right way to view the garden. At Versailles this consisted of a set of instructions on the right way to show the gardens to people, written by Louis XIV himself. At Stourhead, there is a right way to walk round (anticlockwise). At Rievaulx Terrace, in Yorkshire, completed as late as 1758, the direction of the visitor's response consisted of the placing of twelve cleared vistas through the belt of woodland between the terrace and the ruins of Rievaulx Abbey, so that the abbey is only visible from the twelve viewpoints. Delightful as these three places are, they nevertheless involve attempts to manipulate the responses of visitors. The creators of Augustan gardens had believed that their gardens were a freeing of nature from the fetters of formal geometrical layouts, and indeed they were freer than the geometrical gardens: but there were distinct limits to the freedom of people walking within them and interpreting them. These limits had also been the object of fun in *The Clandestine Marriage:* in the second scene of Act Four, Lord Ogleby is anxious to reach Fanny, whom he has seen in another part of the garden: "She is but in the next walk; but there is such a deal of this damn'd crinkum-crankum, as Sterling calls it, that one sees people for half an hour before one can get to them." If the Elysian Fields at Stowe, the gardens at Stourhead and Studley, and the Claudian landscape at Castle Howard are to be "read" aright, they depend on the spectator walking through the garden in the right direction. Brown's landscapes were the first through which the visitor was able to walk at will, erratically. They were places for people to wander in solitude and contemplation, or to enjoy with only intimate friends and family; places of mood, not intellect. The interpretation of what he saw and found was equally up to the visitor alone, without diminishing his enjoyment. At Sledmere, and in Brown's other gardens, we make our journey anew at every visit. It is the liberating of the visitor's sensibility by freeing his response to the landscape which is Brown's great triumph and contribution to gardening. □



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A FINE GATHERING

Three talented decorators contribute their best to the Milton Petries' apartment in New York

BY CHRISTOPHER HEMPHILL PHOTOGRAPHS BY KAREN RADKAI



David Easton created a vista from the dining room, *opposite,* through the entrance hall to the living room in the New York apartment of the Milton Petries. The dining-room chairs from the Benjamin Sonnenberg sale and the entrance-hall blackamoors from the Kathryn Bache Miller sale give evidence of Mrs. Petrie's auction-going. *Above:* A Régence console from the Godmersham Park sale furnishes the entrance hall, where Easton deployed *faux* stone walls, *faux* mahogany doors, and *faux* marble cornices, moldings, and pediments.



A Romney portrait in the living room is flanked by a pair of Hubert Robert landscapes. David Easton copied the carpet from an Empire document. The gilded Louis XVI fauteuils have been recovered in silk from Brunschwig & Fils, which also supplied the silk for the curtains and the goffered velvet that covers the upholstered pieces





An Adam mirror hangs over a sofa, *above,* in another view of the living room. Mark Hampton likes the fact that the Empire chandelier in the library, *opposite above,* is "of the same moment" as the Regency chairs. *Opposite below:* Another view of the library shows a Chippendale bookcase.

When Carroll Petrie appeared unannounced at David Easton's door, she was acting characteristically. Equally in character, Easton at first had no idea who she was. Guilelessness like his is rare in the decorating profession.

("She showed up at the office one day out of the blue," he recalls, "and it's been chaos ever since. Everyone goes crazy trying to please her. She turns on that Southern charm and, boy, you just want to get down and scrape the ground to make it perfect for her. 'Who *is* this?' I wondered. Of course, I've since heard the *histoire,* so to speak . . .")

Mrs. Petrie's story has been the stuff of romantic fiction. Indeed, it has provided material for more than one *roman à clef:* how, in the forties, she left Greenville, South Carolina, to become a model in New York; how at Maxim's she caught the eye of the rich and dashing Marqués de Portago, a race-car driver who was the namesake of the King of Spain; and how, at the peak of their charmed life together in Paris in the fifties, the Marqués met a tragic end in the Millemiglia race. Afterward, for his widow, came world travel, further fame as a big-game huntress, countless mentions in the society columns, two subsequent marriages . . . and one more, which was to make her Mrs. Milton Petrie, the wife of a retailing tycoon said to be worth something approaching a billion dollars. As such, Mrs. Petrie proposed a project to David Easton—the remarkable apartment you see here.

"It's not big, you know," she demurs in the honeyed cadences of her native South Carolina. "But I hope we've





made the most of it." In fact, as luxury apartments go, it *is* compact, having been subdivided from a larger unit in the fifties. Rather insensitively remodeled then on an "open" plan, it nevertheless retained the high ceilings and perfectly proportioned windows that were hallmarks of Rosario Candela, the great classically trained architect who designed this and so many of New York's most desirable apartment buildings. Easton set about reestablishing symmetries, axes, and vistas, not disdaining, when necessary, contrivances like gib and sham doors. ("Let's say we re-classicized it," he says.) Such is the wisdom of Vitruvian precepts that the apartment now appears larger than it actually is.

Although not registered as an architect, Easton possesses a knowledge of the classical orders that exceeds that of many modern architects. The same can be said of Mark Hampton and Robert Denning, whom Mrs. Petrie invited to the project some time after Easton had defined the apartment's architecture. Denning took over the decoration of the dining room and bedrooms while Hampton finished off the library. That the results never give the impression of too many cooks has a good deal to do with the classical vocabulary shared by all three decorators—but even more with the pervading taste of Mrs. Petrie. ("Carroll orchestrated it all," Easton says simply.)

With his partner, Vincent Fourcade, Bob Denning had already worked for Mrs. Petrie in the sixties. In those days tusks figured prominently in her décor, trophies not just of fashion but of her favorite sport. In the seventies, bowing to ecological pressure groups—as well as to changing fashions in decoration—she abandoned first hunting, then the tusks. Now, in this apartment, she has returned to the period and the place that marked the original formation of her taste, the Paris of Charles de Beistegui, Arturo Lopez-Willshaw—and the Duchess of Windsor.

("Her mention of the Duchess set me off," Easton recalls. "I went back and looked at all the pictures of the Moulin." "Like a number of American women in Paris," Denning adds, "Carroll was a pupil of the Duchess. It's a very interesting episode in the history of taste. It's what the Americans taught the Europeans—and then it came back to America. That, I think, was the last sumptuous period.")

"It was a smaller world, somehow," Mrs. Petrie recalls. "Everybody really did know everybody. Sooner or later . . . you met. And everything was on a very grand scale. But you could live like a king for very little money—if you had taste. You didn't have to be a billionaire. The first years of my life in Europe were spent learning. I wanted to learn French if I was going to live there, but I also wanted to learn about all the beautiful things I suddenly had access to. I prowled the Left Bank—the rue Jacob, the rue Bonaparte—and then I'd go to the Flea Market four or five times a week. It was all food for the soul."

Apart from the Duchess of Windsor, she remembers the South Americans of the period, in particular, as "standouts." "As foreigners," she adds, "I think we all had a certain liberty about mixing very, very good things with not so good things, which you couldn't have done if you were French." ("My *(Text continued on page 218)*



Carroll Petrie, *above,* poses in the living room in front of one of a pair of George III satinwood bookcases. "She's very Nattier, 18th century," says Bob Denning, who designed the dining room, *opposite,* around an actual Nattier portrait. The *rose du Barry* damask on the walls comes from Lee Jofa.





A Venetian rococo mirror hangs over a transitional Louis XV/Louis XVI commode, *above,* in Mrs. Petrie's "boudoirlike" bedroom, designed by Bob Denning around a Brunschwig & Fils fabric she found. It covers not just the walls but the Louis XV bed, *opposite*. The slipper chairs are covered in antique needlepoint that echoes the Regency needlepoint rug.


INTERIOR DECORATION



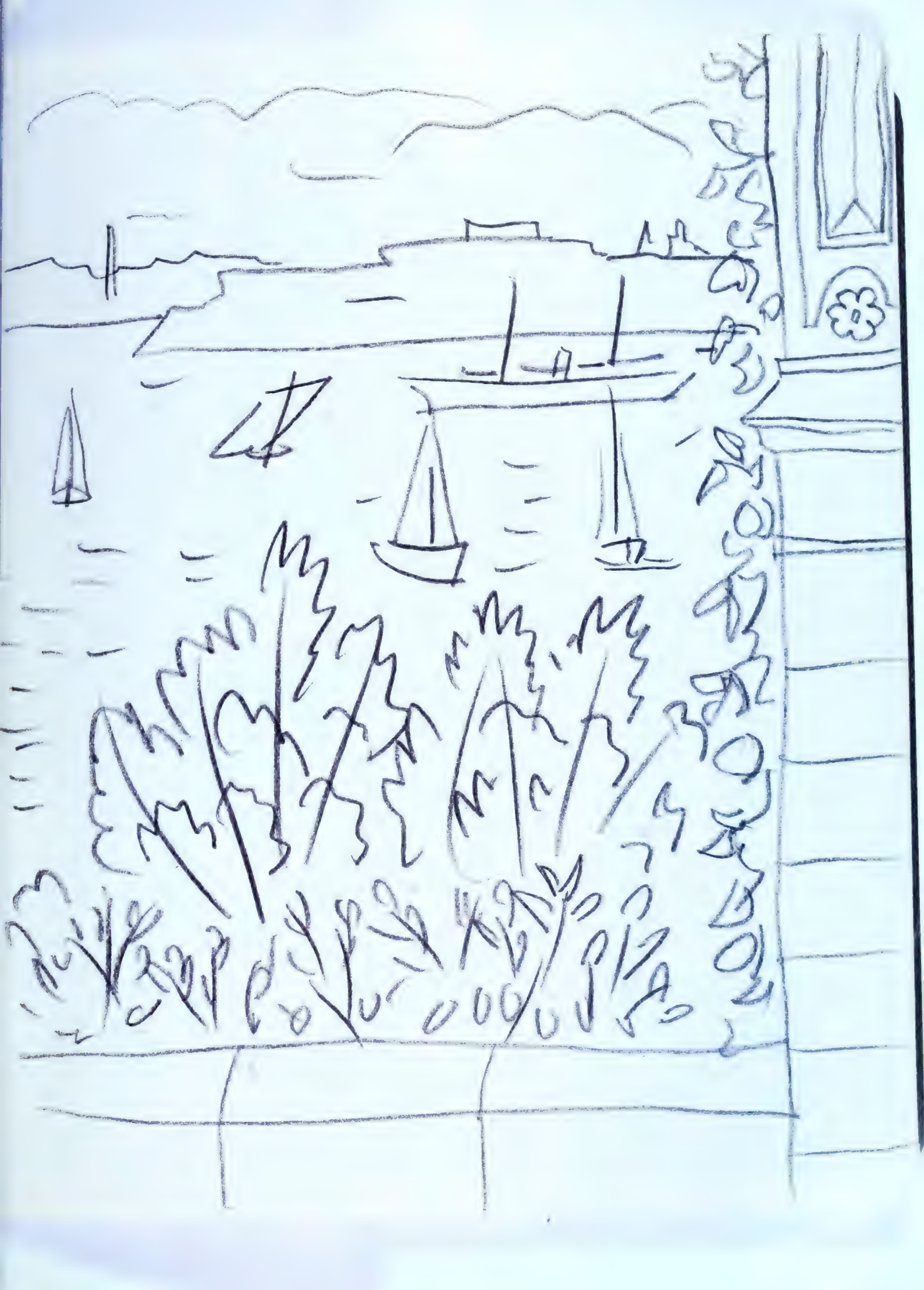
Two Women Running on the Beach, 1922, *above.* View of Saint-Malo from Dinard, *opposite*

MUSE

THE DOMESTIC PICASSO

Drawings from his 1922 sketchbooks reveal the sunlight and shadow of the artist's summer in Brittany

BY JOHN RICHARDSON





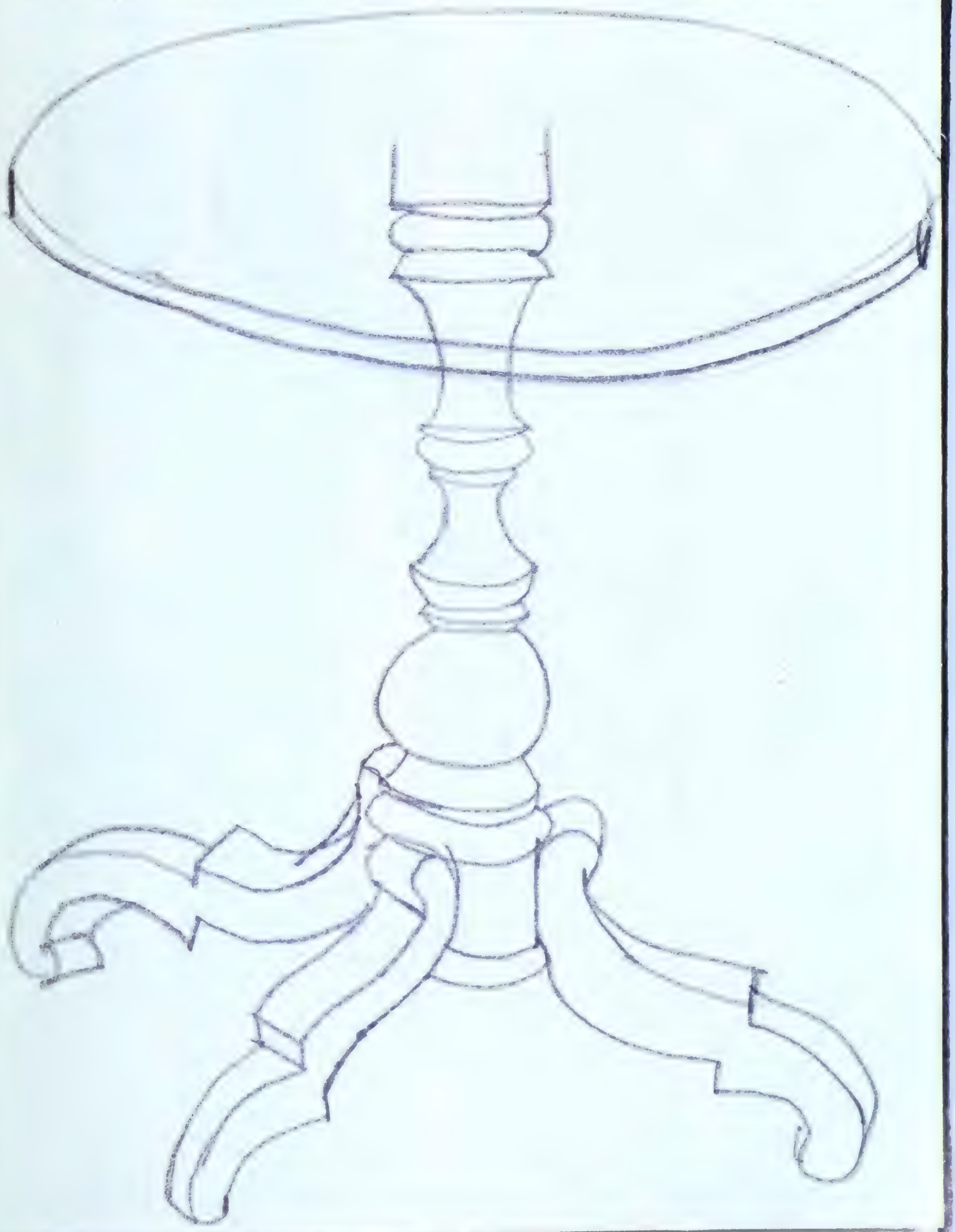
Mother and child, *above;* gueridon, pencil on paper, *opposite.*

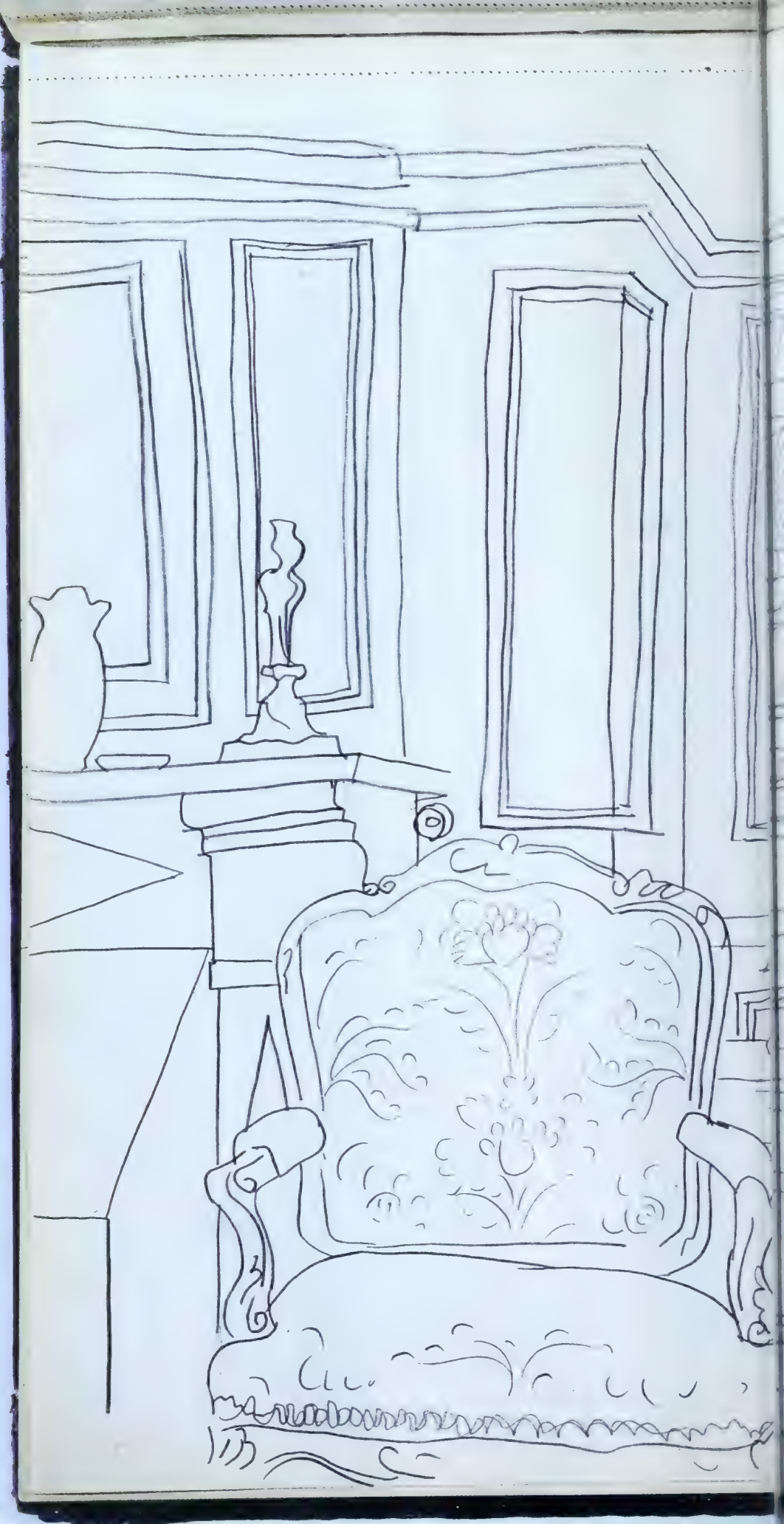
Born in Málaga, raised in Barcelona, Picasso was very much a child of the Mediterranean, and thus could never resist its atavistic pull for long. Why else spend the summer of 1910 in Cadaqués (on the Costa Brava) if not to recharge his Cubist batteries? And in the years immediately following World War I, was he not one of the pioneers who transformed the French Riviera—traditionally a winter resort for golden oldies—into a summer paradise for bright young things? And in the summer of 1919 where else did Picasso take Olga, the beautiful if far from gifted ballet dancer he had married the year before, but to Saint-Raphaël, some 25 miles west of Cannes? In fact it wasn't such a good idea. Picasso relished the ordinariness of the place; but Olga, who was all too conventional, would have preferred the *confort cossu* of Monte Carlo. Next year they decided on a change: the new "in" place, Juan-les-Pins, a small fishing village which Florence Gould and her husband were transforming into a smart resort. Picasso loved the informality and the sympathetic companions—the Gerald Murphys among others—whom he found there. If they did not return to the Riviera the following summer, it was because Olga gave birth to a son, Paulo, in February. To be on the safe side, Picasso decided that they should spend the summer of 1921 in a rented villa at Fontainebleau—within reach of doctors. Just as well: doctors' services were required. However, the pastoral charms of the Île-de-France were not at all to the artist's urban taste, and before the summer was over he threatened to desecrate the dainty garden with a street lamp and *pissotière.*

Next summer (1922) Picasso once again hankered for his beloved Mediterranean, but Olga, already emerging in her true termagant colors, was obdurate: the baby needed the bracing air of the English Channel; so did she. Bracing, in Picasso's book, meant freezing. However, as he was still making every effort to be a model husband, concern for the bouncing, redheaded baby and invalidish wife prevailed over his own inclinations. Hence the choice of Dinard: a nice, safe resort in Brittany, with nothing bohemian, nothing *louche* about it. A note in one of Picasso's sketchbooks of the period reveals that Olga consulted a local real-estate agent, Madame Grosvalet, who came up with a large Second Empire house with a mansard roof on the Grande Rue (now avenue Georges V), called the Villa Beauregard. The villa was strategically placed: perched above the sea, close to the Grand Hotel and just opposite the Port de Plaisance, where the ferry docked. And it lived up to its name in that it had an attractive view across the estuary to the ramparts of Saint-Malo; it also had a pleasant, rather overgrown garden.

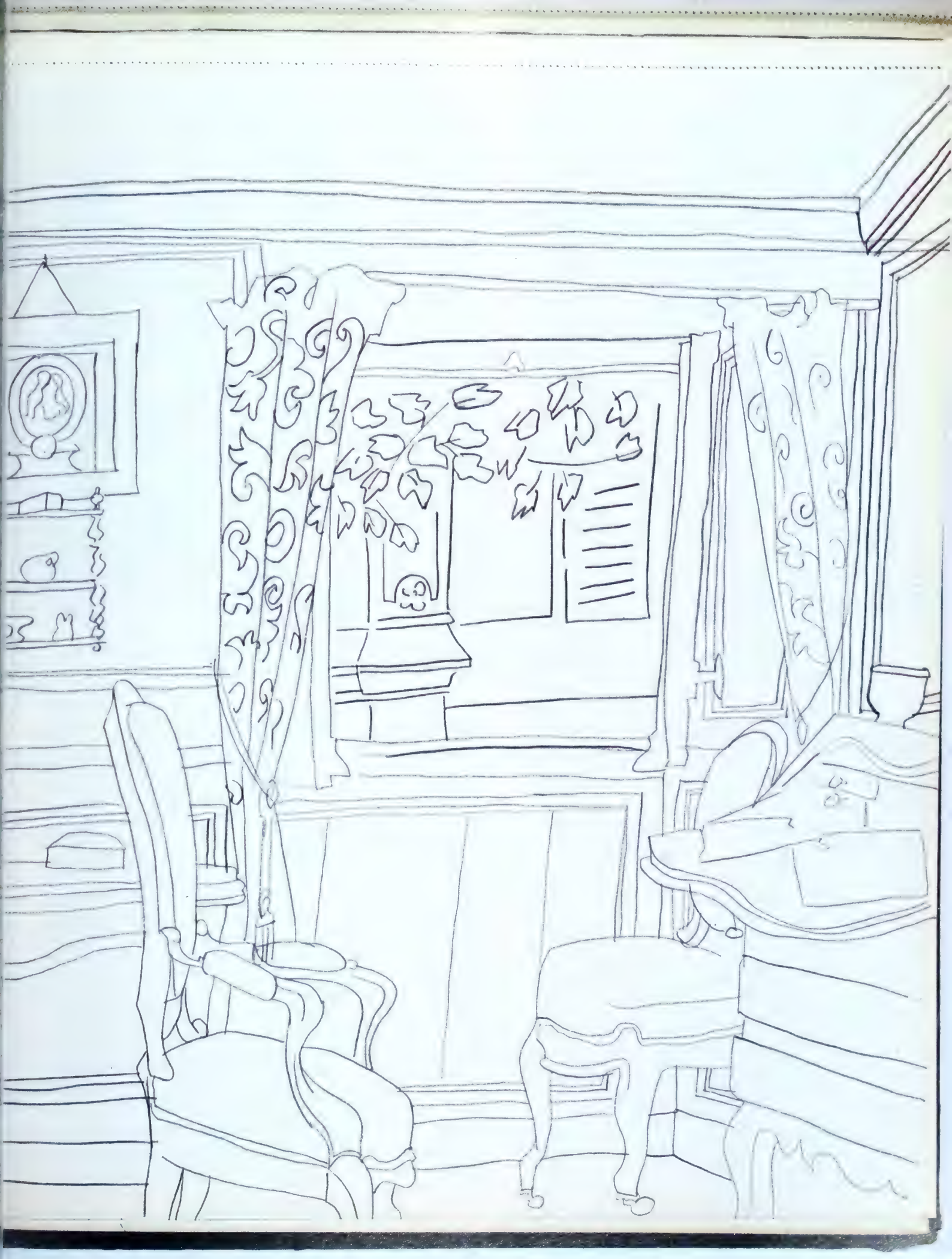
Years later, Picasso confessed that he found Dinard deadly. Just as well. The stuffy place and the stuffy regime that Olga managed to impose on her husband made for great art. If the resort had been more lively, work might not have poured so freely from Picasso's pencil and brush. One need only cite the magnificent series of *Maternités:* mother and child groups. Some are portraits of Olga and Paulo, but most are allegories—idealized images of motherhood couched in the classical idiom which Picasso reserved for his wife so long as she was good, or at least compliant. By the end of the vacation he had done three large paintings of this idyllic subject and at the same time filled a sketchbook with *Maternités.* Most interesting are rough sketches which reveal how the artist arrived at a final image; there are also highly finished studies whose slight glibness indicates that they were done after and not before the paintings.

When Picasso installed himself in new quarters, it was not enough to sign a lease, he had to take pictorial as well as physical possession of it. Only by drawing or painting the place could he make it his own. All part of his shamanism. No sooner had he arrived in Dinard than he proceeded to fill a large sketchbook with studies of the house inside and out, just as he had the year before at Fontainebleau. And how redolent they are of French provincial décor (the real thing, not the tarted-up version we see over here): these drawings of neat *dix-huitième* paneling hung with mirrors and whatnots; the Empire secretaire with its obligatory ormolu candlesticks; the well-waxed parquet reflecting too many cabriole legs; and that staple of Breton and Norman interiors, the huge oak screw off a cider press. Picasso also did several studies of the garden, wonderful details of wrought-iron chairs, wobbly urns, and chestnut trees. And then there are countless crisp drawings of the sea view punctuated by flagpoles. The silly, frilly architecture of the nineteenth-century resort is contrasted with

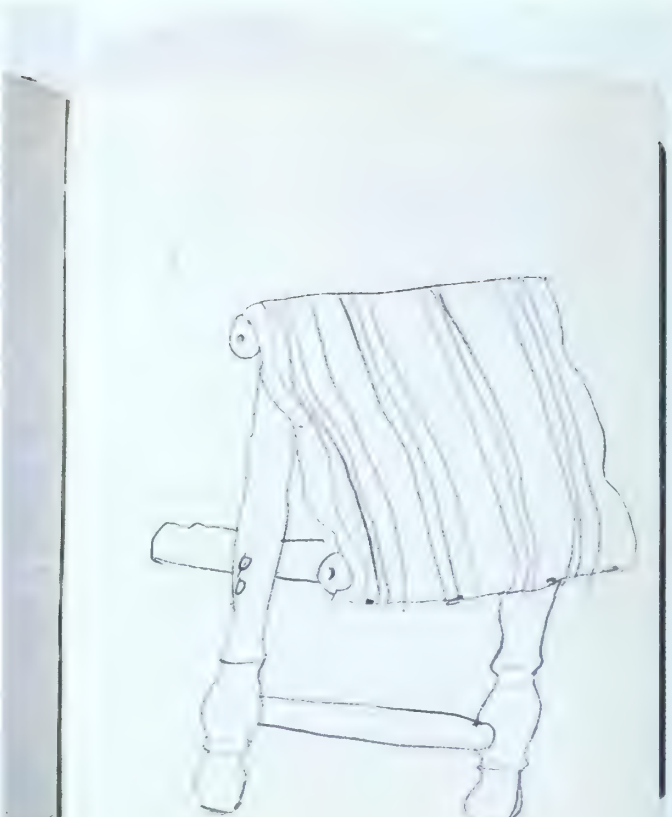




Salon of Villa Beauregard, Dinard







Pencil sketches done in the garden of Villa Beauregard, *this page;*
detail of curtain and tieback in the salon of Villa Beauregard, *opposite*





the seventeenth-century ramparts of Saint-Malo across the water. In between, the boats are caught in Picasso's apt shorthand: the bustling ferry, the lopsided yacht, the pleasure craft aflutter with bunting. These Dinard drawings transcend mere topography, for they are executed with a clarity, economy, and precision that is all the more dazzling for being deadpan. If there is no hint of slickness, it is because Picasso is like a man suddenly cured of blindness: he somehow persuades us that he is looking at these familiar objects, these banal views for the first time; and his wonderment at ordinary things rubs off on us. Look, for instance, how he has depicted the tasseled tieback reproduced here with such vividness that the drawing seems as real (which is not the same as realistic) as the real thing. For Picasso this is what realism was all about.

Most days the Picassos, plus nanny, would join other *comme il faut* families on the *plage de l'Écluse* or the *plage du Prieuré*—both within a short walk of the Villa Beauregard. Although he couldn't swim, Picasso loved beach life, particularly when it involved his children. He was also obsessed by the spectacle of bathers playing ball or frolicking in the sea—a spectacle he would store up in imagination for weeks or months before envisaging it on paper or canvas. And how he loved to draw and sculpt in the sand—grinning sardonically as the tide effaced a "valuable masterpiece" (the comment of a shocked dealer). Some magnificent drawings done this summer of a naked man—a reference to the artist himself—lying on the beach watched over by his wife and child testify to the unusually tender mood of this vacation.

An element of eroticism—sometimes the merest hint, sometimes a heavy blast—is apt to permeate these *plages,* so much so that by the late twenties Picasso seldom portrays the beach as anything but a sexual arena. We get an inkling of this in his most famous work of this summer: the little gouache of two mammoth maenads racing ecstatically along the beach, hair streaming in the wind, breasts popping out of white tunics. How did Picasso endow this minuscule panel (13 by 16¼ inches) with such monumentality that a shipper, with only a photograph to go on, sent a large truck to pick it up? The answer is that gigantism, as Fuseli said in one of his lectures, "lies in the disproportion of the parts"; by grossly emphasizing limbs and fingers, the artist transforms his figures into giantesses. When asked about the elephantiasis of some of these "classical" women—in this respect the reverse of Olga, who kept her body skinny with ballet exercises—Picasso explained that when he was a small child at Málaga, he used to slip under his parents' dining-room table in order to peep at the monstrously bloated thighs of one of his aunts.

Suitably enough, the gouache of these gigantic joggers—blown up some twenty times—was used as a drop curtain for a ballet, *Le Train bleu,* which Diaghilev commissioned from Cocteau (scenario), Nijinska (choreography), Milhaud (music), and Chanel (costumes). The Ballets Russes' Prince Schervashidze did such a flawless job of enlargement ("perhaps the most demanding task ever allotted to a scene-painter") that Picasso signed the curtain as if he had actually *(Text continued on page 240)*





Paulo, the artist's son, seated on
a chamber pot, *above;* mother and child,
opposite, pencil and watercolor.





GREEK REVIVAL ON FRENCH PRAIRIE

A legendary Oregon house is brought back to life by designers Wallace Huntington and Mirza Dickel

BY MARILYN SCHAFER PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN VAUGHAN



A view toward the gate from the front porch of the William Case house. A peristyle of 34 columns encircles the house, which adjoins the barn.



The front of the William Case house, *above,* is approached via railroad-tie and gravel steps bordered by boxwood, artemisia, violas, and geraniums. *Opposite:* The slate courtyard between the kitchen and adjoining barn is planted with creeping herbs.

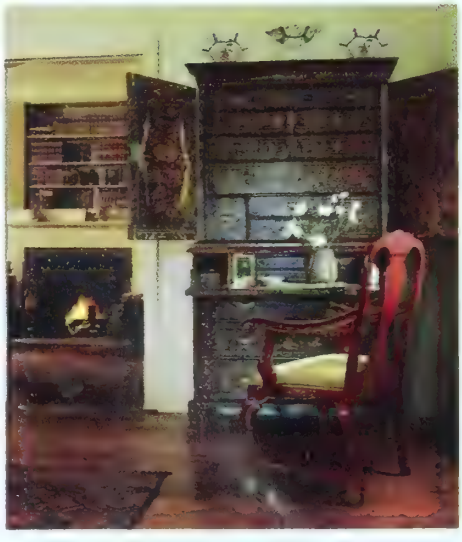
French Prairie, its gentle landscape enclosed in a sweeping curve of the Willamette River, stood for the land of promise to those settlers who journeyed westward along the rigorous Oregon Trail. The romantic idea that the American West was to be "The Garden of the World" would dominate American thinking in the nineteenth century, and this verdant, pastoral, almost untouched area of Oregon seemed that dream come true. An early homesteader, J. Quinn Thorton, recorded his impressions of the countryside. "Many of the prairies are several miles in extent," he wrote in 1846, "but the smaller ones . . . where the woodland and the plain alternate frequently are the most beautiful . . . the space between these small prairies is covered with an open forest of tall, straight evergreens . . . the clusters of trees are so carefully arranged, the openings so gracefully curved, the grounds so open and clean, that it all seems to be a work of art; and these beautiful avenues are calculated to cheat the imagination into the belief that they lead to some farmhouse or pleasant village."

First to arrive and settle in, the avant-garde of homesteaders were the French-Canadian fur trappers from the Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Vancouver who gave French Prairie its name. Heading south for political freedom, they set up farms, building their French-style log cabins from trees felled nearby. Then came missionaries and a handful of American settlers. On May 2, 1843, they met at nearby Champoeg—so named half in French, half in Indian for the fields of bright blue camass flowers that surrounded it—and voted to form an American government in Oregon country.

In 1845, William Case and his young bride, Sarah, arrived



from Indiana. Trained as a carpenter, the energetic 24-year-old William Case became a dervish of activity, wasting less than five hours in sleep a night. In 1846, he acquired 1,500 acres of French Prairie land wisely well away from the prone-to-flood Willamette River. The property, described as legendary in its time, had a ravine, a stream, and a forest of tall trees, with prairie land leveling into broad, easy-to-work fields. The farm Case created there rivaled the best in the area. He built his own sawmill, brick kiln, blacksmith shop, and forge as well as smokehouse and washhouse. But his most spectacular construction was the main house—completed in 1859, the year Oregon became a state.



Floating across the meadow like a classic Greek temple painted red, the one-story building was enclosed within a peristyle of 34 Doric columns—each carved from a single, arrow-straight native Douglas fir—with more huge, green firs rising out of the ravines and swales to the west as the perfect natural backdrop. Property on



In the dining room, *above,* are an English burled-walnut table, George III petit-point chairs, and owner Wallace Huntington's collection of Blue Fitzhugh and Cantonware. *Opposite above:* The larger of two wing chairs in sitting room is covered with hand-blocked English linen, circa 1920. *Opposite below:* Japanned red lacquer Queen Anne–style chair and 17th-century English mulberry desk.

French Prairie seemed to this industrious young couple a gift from the gods, a gift they must return by developing it to its greatest potential. That, in a way, was the philosophy of the West.

By 1976, this frontier landmark was quietly moldering under generations of flaky coats of white paint. Landscape architect Wallace Huntington and interior designer Mirza Dickel, both history buffs, had known of the Case house, and when it came up for sale, they decided that together they could bring it back to its honest grandeur. Large even for today, the colonnaded sweep—almost ninety feet in length—made it an impressive sight from the road. Painted back to the red with which it began life, burnished and restored as closely as possible to its original state, and squared on its brick piers so that air can flow underneath—which some say shows the influence of Windward Island houses in the Caribbean—the old Case land-grant farmhouse has become an exciting window into early Oregon history.

Mirza worked with architect Charles Gilman Davis to make the house and large attached barn livable for today. They changed as little as possible. Of the six small identical bedrooms aligned in two rows for perfect cross-ventilation, one was converted into a bathroom and two others became dressing rooms with antique cupboards as closets. The practical addition of a narrow pantry along one side of the inviting open kitchen was the only other change.

Wallace took the garden as

his own domain and set about removing what was not useful, turning the old smokehouse into a snug potting shed. He pruned and fed the orchard and lightly formalized the flat fields with flowers, hedges, and trees—adding just enough civilizing shape to make window vistas and accent the symmetrical natural allées of native Douglas fir.

Actually, the entire house was constructed of the ubiquitous native fir: the wide planks of the polished floors, the dramatic twenty-inch-high baseboard moldings cut from broad slices at the heart of what must have been ancient, aboriginal trees. Most of the wall paneling was made of horizontal fir boards cut in William Case's own sawmill. The handsome dining-room paneling, however, was of wide vertical boards with each edge rabbeted inside the panel so that a narrow inserted shim the length of the board would keep it from warping in the damp climate. The delicate fir window mullions, belying their strength, still hold the original glass panes with only a rare replacement. To show the wavy glass, Mirza designed curtains bordered with wide bands of muted Fortuny cotton to swag behind the original bold wooden-peg-shaped tiebacks.

While they were combing the local barn and garage sales of French Prairie for early Oregon antiques, a Case family four-poster bed turned up at an auction. Soon thereafter, a friend of Wallace's, who had learned of *(Text continued on page 228)*



In the kitchen, antique primitive chairs from Oregon, with punched-deerskin seats still taut, are restored to their original delft blue. Early-19th-century American cupboard, filled with Guatemalan pottery, is crowned with a figure of a rooster, an 18th-century windmill weight.





A corner of the master bedroom, *above,* shows the six-foot, six-inch-long four-poster bed made for the first master of the house, William Case. Pink cyclamen in a Chinese porcelain bowl is on 18th-century tiger-maple candlestand from New England. *Opposite:* Additional Case furniture fills the guest bedroom: bird's-eye maple sleigh bed and chest of drawers.



KL'S ROME



DANIEL JOUNNEAU

Karl Lagerfeld's newest house evokes the ateliers of Scandinavian artists who flocked to Italy around 1800

BY JAVIER ARROYUELO
PHOTOGRAPHS BY FRANÇOIS HALARD

Karl Lagerfeld is the only other person I know who doesn't like Proust and will tell you so with little urging. Among Paris glitterati, who live by haute couture on one hand and by ready-to-read on the other, this is a shocking posture. In my experience of Paris salons, when you express your contempt for the great Marcel tempers are likely to pop like champagne corks. But for all his urbanity and poise, Karl, who ranks the mercurial Paul Léautaud among his favorite writers, never hesitates—I suspect he even enjoys—igniting little feuds, particularly over matters of style. His decided ideas about these matters are evident in the three major fashion lines—Chanel, Fendi, KL—he is accountable for. Though he provides exquisite clothes for the witty and chic, his philosophy of taste is best ex-

Karl Lagerfeld, *above,* in a Venetian tricorn. *Right: The Royal Academy of Copenhagen* by Bei, circa 1815, hangs in the front hall and was a source of many ideas for the apartment.





Lagerfeld wanted this room to be a drawing room/atelier. At foot of stairs with handrail from a Roman palazzo is an 18th-century copy of the Medici Venus next to a painting by Pelagio Palagi circa 1815. Under stairs, a Swedish *lit d'enfant* covered in copy of old Italian fabric. Chairs are Piedmontese Louis XVI; the Italian chandelier, circa 1790.





Another view of the drawing room looking toward the mirror in hall, which creates illusion of an enfilade. Early-19th-century Italian mahogany bibliotheques with 18th-century copies of classical sculpture flank the doorway over which hangs painting by Gaetano Schiaffino, circa 1820, of ten Roman painters who used to frequent Caffè Greco, and to left is Piedmontese chaise longue, circa 1805.





pressed in the many houses that he has possessed through the years and dressed up with unerring panache. While he enjoys the fanfare and glitter that surrounds his fashion persona, the man behind the dark glasses who frequently appears in glossy magazines and at social events is a discerning *connoisseur,* voracious reader, and earnest *amateur* of art and history.

Lagerfeld collects paintings, books, antiques, and beautiful homes. For the past ten years he has been perfecting Grandchamp, his Brittany castle, into eighteenth-century splendor. His Paris apartment, in the Faubourg-St.-Germain, filled to the ceiling with paintings by the likes of Antoine Pesne, the portraitist of the Prussian kings, stands out as a self-possessed exercise in classical French sumptuousness. In Monaco, where he took up residence in 1981—he calls the principality "an earthly paradise"—he lives, of all places, in a high-rise apartment whimsically furnished with Post-Modern Memphis originals in funny shapes and furious colors. These days, though, Lagerfeld is keeping an eye on yet another project in Monaco: a new house for which he is thinking in terms of pure Biedermeier. Once a month, Karl flies to Rome for an extremely brief sojourn connected with his work at Fendi's. There, he has completed a ravishing pied-à-terre.

Karl approaches decorative matters in an almost lyrical frame of mind. One senses that these houses past, present, and future are his most genuine passion. As he sees it, a house possesses a soul—or at least deserves one. Although he never dismisses the actual history of a house, it never, in his view, counts as much as the fictitious perfect past with which he is ready to provide it. *(Text continued on page 229)*



In the guest room, *opposite* and *above,* a Tiffany trefoil lamp and a fragment from the coronation cape of Louis VIII are in front of a painting of a Donizetti opera setting. The red damask fabric on walls and the carpet were copied from the Winterhalter painting that hangs in this room. Views of opera sets are on the far wall and the thronelike neo-Gothic chair on right unfolds into a chaise longue.





In the master bedroom Lagerfeld put in verdigris wood paneling, which hides closets, air conditioning, and windows so daylight enters only from the skylight. The 18th-century Piedmontese Louis XVI bed is covered in a toile de Jouy, and the exotic Aubusson carpet with palm trees and elephants is from 1815.





PANORAMA OF GLAMOUR

Ralph Jones decorates a pied-à-terre that stands up to the skyline

BY GABRIELLE WINKEL
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JEFF MacNAMARA

Poised to catch the living-room view, a pair of French Victorian chairs covered in Clarence House fabric. Small two-tier tables are French Art Deco; on ledge, a painting by Harold Stephenson.



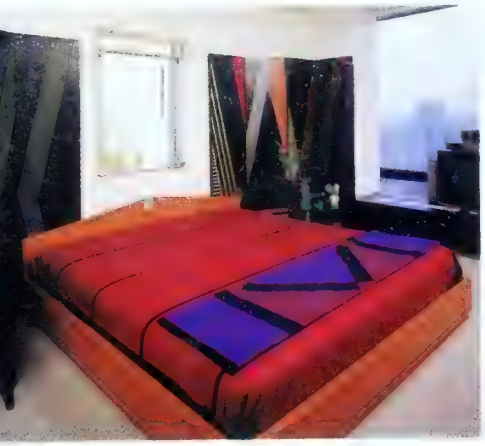




Anchored by a handsome fifties rug, *left,* are Biedermeier leather chairs, Le Corbusier chaise, English Deco coffee table. Painting by Dan Williams from dealer Karen Amiel, drawings by Léger and Kandinsky. *Above:* Biedermeier console and mirror.

It is a challenge to decorate a room that competes with a view of Manhattan. New York- and Connecticut-based decorator Ralph Jones (formerly of Jones-Sills Inc.) was aware of that when he was asked to design a pied-à-terre for a couple who planned to use the apartment primarily for entertaining. The living room is a wedge-shaped space consisting of two perpendicular walls meeting a huge curved window overlooking buildings that line the East River. This room was to provide plenty of seating without distracting

from the view. Jones selected a combination of Biedermeier and French Art Deco furniture because both "have a simplicity in their design, an architectural purity." For comfort, he designed an oversized sofa, "the only element of softness in the room." The chairs are placed for spontaneous grouping and re-



grouping; the sofa is secure against a wall.

The colors Jones chose are "tones of sunset, earth colors, faded, muted, relaxed," his personal favorites. The wheat color of the columns in the room was suggested by the dramatic wool carpet from the fifties, which incorporates patterns that evoke fireworks.

The bedroom is decorated with brilliant screens by Richard Haas, but it is linked to the more muted main room by a bed lacquered to resemble satinwood and styled with a Biedermeier flavor. □

In front of a mirrored section of living-room wall, *right,* Biedermeier secretary, 19th-century French silver lamps, Venetian-glass floor lamps. In reflection, Biedermeier chair with black patent leather seat. *Above:* Richard Haas screens in the bedroom with lacquered bed by Ralph Jones, built by Tansuya in New York.





ARTIST OF THE GARDEN

The extraordinary landscape designs of Brazil's Roberto Burle Marx flow from a vast knowledge of plants, a sure and sensitive eye, a romantic temperament, and a thoroughly modern sensibility

BY DENISE OTIS PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICK HALES

In Burle Marx's garden for Luis Carlos and Ninninha Magalhaes Lins, plants and vistas are as strictly but subtly controlled as the mountain stream that swells to a pool—for swimming—beside the house.





To simply list the medals, awards, and honors that Roberto Burle Marx, *below,* has received from all over the world for both landscape design and painting would fill this page. *Opposite page:* A characteristic tapestry of leaf forms and colors frames a breathtaking view of the Christ of the Corcovado in the Rio de Janeiro garden of José and Maria do Carmo Nabuco.





Roberto Burle Marx's gardens, with few exceptions, are tropical gardens and even if you feel with Francis Bacon that "there is no excellent beauty that hath not some strangeness in the proportion" tropical gardens seem on first sight to have a bit too much strangeness for those of us who live in the temperate zones. The plants have different, almost aggressive shapes for eyes unused to them, and the scale of everything, land and plants, is so big. A single bromeliad on the windowsill does not prepare for thousands cascading down a volcanic peak. With a longer look, however, you begin to appreciate that the originality of Burle Marx's gardens lies as much, if not more, in the design as in the planting. Yet his celebration of the flora of his native Brazil—well before the current concern for ecological propriety—is a fundamental facet of his modernness.

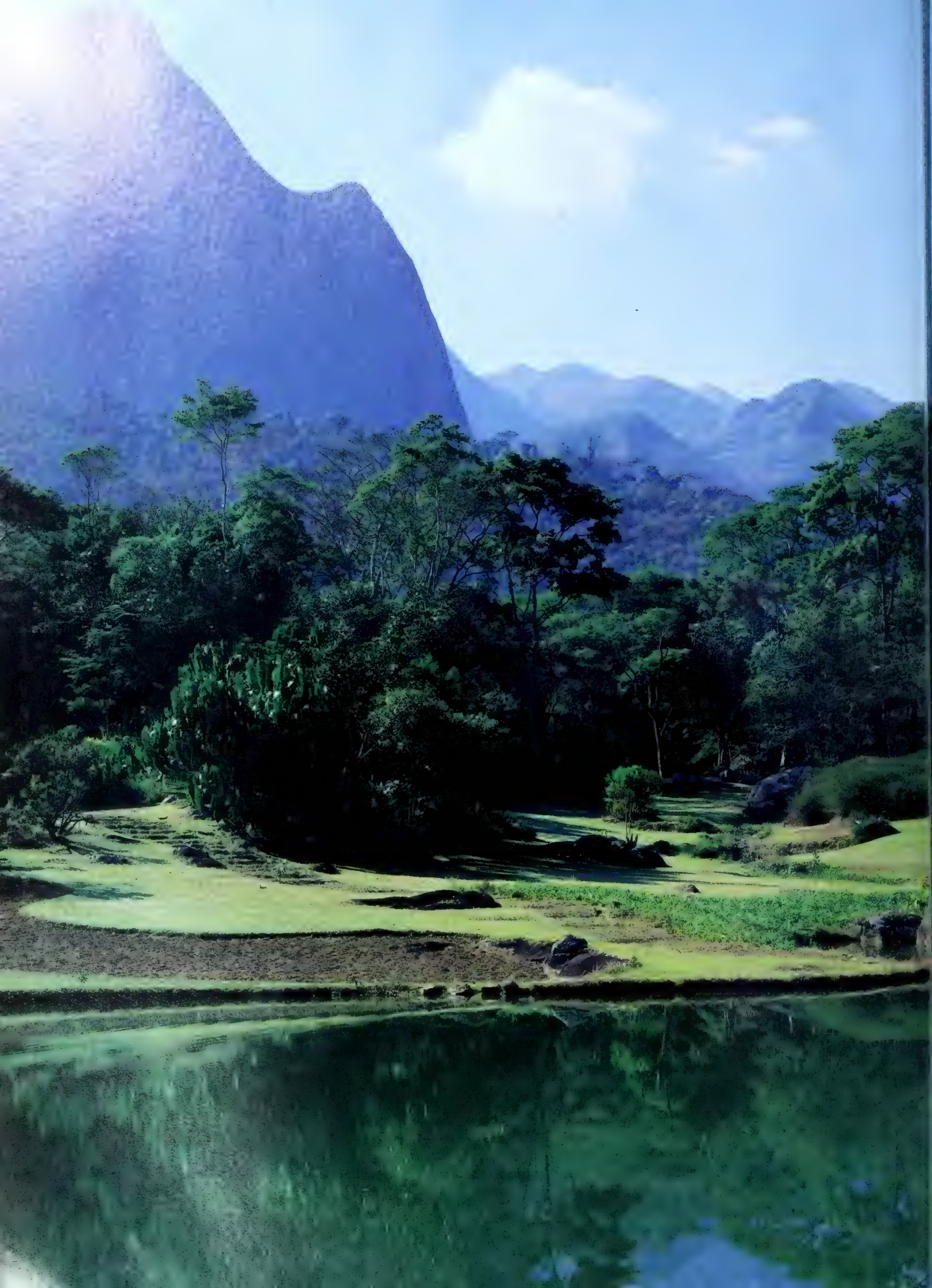
In his long career—his first commissioned garden dates from 1932—Burle Marx has addressed almost every challenge that can be offered to a contemporary landscape designer: small city and suburban gardens, large estates; gardens for hospitals, museums, clubs, colleges, commercial and governmental buildings; parks, airports, and giant urban developments. His responses have been as contemporary: it is not often that a designer can make parked cars seem an intended part of the composition, as he has in his Copacabana beachfront. And his designs are as varied as the volume of his work: he has a very individual vocabulary of forms and shapes but it is such a large one that they are rarely combined in the same way or play the same role from one composition to another. His style is not easily summed up in a single phrase.

When, this past October, the president of the American Society of Landscape Architects, in presenting Burle Marx with the Society's highest award, the ASLA Medal, stated that "few individuals have equaled his stature as a twentieth-century Renaissance man within the design professions," he used that rather overworked characterization with more than its customary accuracy. Burle Marx is a painter and a sculptor. He has designed tapestries, jewelry, stage sets, carnival decorations. Conversation at his table—for which he has painted the tablecloth and arranged the flowers—may be conducted in one, some, or all of the six languages he speaks. Quotations and allusions dart from Italian poetry to Brazilian proverbs, French novels to German operas to Spanish folk songs. A serious philosophical discussion in one language has a disconcerting way of sliding into a punning joke in another. His curiosity and enthusiasm seem endless. "If we could live twice in life to do everything, to realize everything. I don't have enough time to do everything I like and I can say I don't lose much time." He doesn't. A day that starts at six with an inspection of his own grounds may include visits to clients, meetings with government officials, a press interview, as well as solid stretches of time at the drawing board and working with his principal associate, Haruyoshi Ono. He has that great gift of the superaccomplishers, the ability to sleep whenever his attention is not needed, as when he is being driven between home and office. And the day is not often all work: his love of good Scotch, good food, good wine, and good company is legendary.

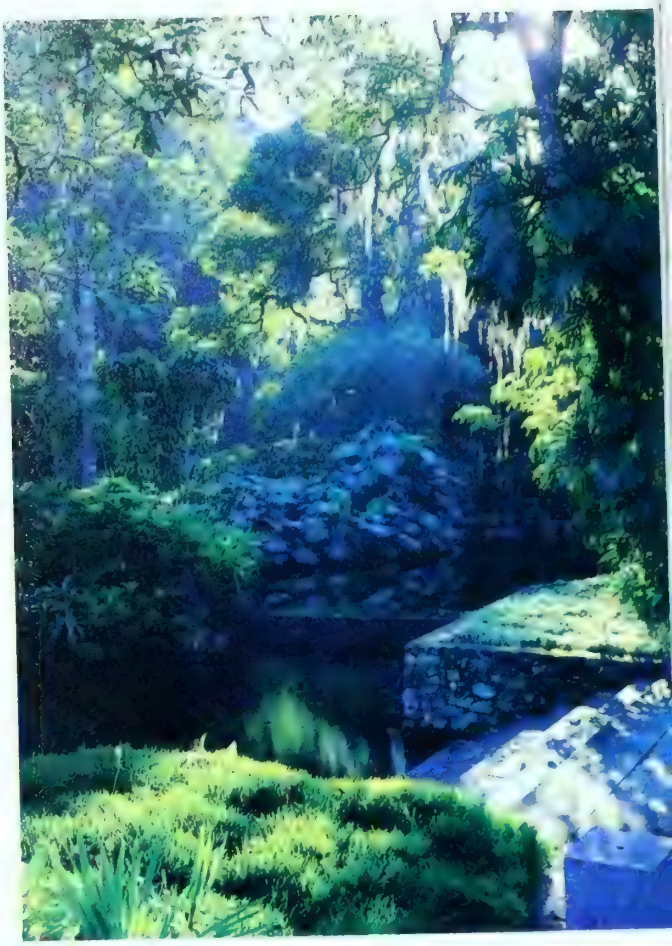
But first, as he tells you, came his love for plants . . . "My mother was cutting and pruning roses in our garden in São Paulo, I was three years old and from that came my first emotion for plants." Two years later, in 1914, the family—his father was German, his mother Brazilian, and he was the fourth of six children—moved

The 1982 Banco Safra plaza in São Paulo, *opposite,* is a new example of the exciting, practical, and contemporary urban spaces that Burle Marx is known for. From the fifteenth floor the colorful stone mosaic patterns in the required paving dominate; on the ground the towering columns of bromeliads and plant-bearing sculptured walls draw the eye. Still more recent works are the 1985 painting, *above,* and the plan, *below,* also 1985, for a 173-acre public park in Petrolina, Pernambuco. The complex design integrates lakes, playing fields, restaurants, an amphitheater, and a clubhouse in a carefully planted landscape.











Burle Marx's famous 1948 Odette Monteiro garden, *left,* clearly shows the artist's hand, and indeed he recontoured the valley and created the lake that draws in sky and mountains. Yet the roll of the land, the shapes and placing of trees, shrubs, and beds are so attuned to the surrounding landscape that the highly original design seems inevitable. Just as carefully ordered, the 1974 Magalhaes Lins garden, *top,* looks more "natural" because plantings are planned to merge into the forested hills that hem in its valley. *Above:* The 1982 water garden at the Marina Barra Club joins pools, jets, aquatics like cyperus in *canteiros,* and columns of orchids, philodendrons, and bromeliads in a rhythmic composition.







From the house, Mr. and Mrs. Celso Colombo's suburban garden, *opposite above,* seems completely enclosed, like a glade in the jungle. But turn back at the bottom, and a dramatic mountain vista opens up, framed by a pair of *Beaucarnea recurvata:* the kind of surprise Burle Marx loves to create in a small garden. In his drawing, *opposite,* elevated paths carry visitors over collections of shade-loving and aquatic plants: a project for an aquarium and lath house in Rio's Parque Flamengo. *Above:* The Colombo house embraces a splendid *Pithecolobium tortum,* a tree Burle Marx brought in from the wild and domesticated. *Right:* The Nabuco garden, typically, shows meticulous attention to paths and paving and gives no hint of the view from the pool enclosure (page 169).







The vertical garden in the atrium of the Xerox do Brasil building in Rio de Janeiro, *above,* offers an ingenious solution to a difficult problem. From an undulating slate-bordered pool at ground level, low-light-tolerant plants like philodendrons and ferns are borne up to the roof on pipe constructions that function at once as sculpture, ladders for the gardeners, and conduits for watering the plants. Cylinders of tree-fern bark wired to the structure provide the growing medium. *Right:* An allée of bamboos arches the entrance drive to the Magalhaes Lins estate with green and golden shade.

to Rio de Janeiro, and by the time he was seven he had his own corner in their garden. The plants he grew were not the ones he was to become famous for: Brazil was still in the grip of the Victorian love for exotics, in this case our familiar roses, carnations, and chrysanthemums. The experiences that were to determine his career came on a two-year visit to Berlin in 1928. The family was musical—his elder brother is a composer and conductor—and at first he studied singing—he still sings and still, at 76, beautifully. "But seeing an exhibition of Van Gogh gave me the wish of creating with painting. And I visited every week the Botanical Garden of Dahlem. And there I discovered, paradoxically, Brazilian flora—brought back by Martius in the last century—and also the ecological plant groups of the different parts of Europe made by Engler. It was this experience, when I came back to Brazil and saw the academic and imitative foreign gardens in conflict with the landscape, that made me wish to create gardens which could be in harmony with their surroundings."

Back home, he enrolled in the National School of Fine Arts, continued to study painting with excursions into architecture and sculpture, and came to know the group of young architects around Lucio Costa who were to revolutionize Brazilian architecture, and with whom he would collaborate on many of his projects. At the same time he used his parents' garden as a laboratory for his ideas to such good effect that Costa, a neighbor and longtime friend, commissioned him to design gardens for houses he was building. With his appointment in 1934 as director of parks in the northern *(Text continued on page 220)*







ROOTED IN NEW YORK

Georgina Fairholme makes the most of a traditional brownstone and treasured antiques

BY ELAINE GREENE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY OBERTO GILI

For the living room's garden-viewing bay, which previously was fitted with small leaded casements, Georgina Fairholme was asked by her clients to design Gothick-style windows and flanking doors, bringing new light and character to the room. Silk at windows and bright flowered linen on slipper chair are from Brunschwig; Clarence House table-skirt fabric; Scalamandré silk stripe on Sheraton chairs.



The living room's French marble fireplace, *above,* replaces a thirties mirrored piece the present owners found here. *Left:* Rooms on this floor are tall enough for overdoor pictures. Corner cupboard is English circa 1780; white serpent chairs from London are thought to be Sicilian. *Opposite:* Library decoration began with a family Heriz rug that has spent four generations in New York.



The nineteenth-century brick and brownstone row houses of New York represent—to far more New Yorkers than can afford them—the ideal way to live in town. They are the perfected form of urban dwelling for comfortable family life. Henry James and Edith Wharton and some of their fictional characters lived in such houses. So did the grandmother and mother of the woman who occupies this 1870 Manhattan brownstone with her husband and their three children.

The continuity of an inherited, still-cherished way of living is evident here in old family treasures such as the marble busts of a great-great-grandmother and her sister along with their painted portraits, a great-grandmother's wedding-present silver coffee and tea service and the Venetian glasses this same ancestor bought on her honeymoon. But even the antique furnishings acquired by the couple on frequent trips abroad reflect the generations-old, strongly English taste of the old-line New Yorker. What could be more English than a fancy for things Italian, which often captivate this confident and sophisticated pair of house furnishers?

And who could be more English than the English-born New York decorator Georgina Fairholme, once a London associate of John Fowler? She has worked with the couple for eleven years, the last eight on this house, and they form a mutual admiration society in which the same words are spoken on both sides: "wonderful eye . . . perfect rapport." The clients concentrate on the antiques. Their decorator's contributions include architectural details such as the Gothick windows in the living room, the soft clear color and special paintwork she is known for, the floral textiles and comfortable upholstery, and, of course, putting it all together. The results please many but no one more than the woman of the house, a self-styled "homebody" who always welcomes a day with no outside obligations. □ *Editor: Kaaren Parker Gray*



Two book walls face each other in the library, which is the family's informal gathering place. In this very personal house, snapshots and portrait photographs mingle casually and attractively with works of art like the Samuel Spode painting. Staffordshire and lusterware, some of it displayed here, are still being collected. Tray table by Trevor Potts. Upholstered furniture is wearing its summer covers in a Brunschwig chintz.


SAN FRANCISCO





For the dining room, which presented the problem of a low ceiling, Georgina Fairholme designed Gothick plasterwork (executed by Clark Bott) that would add a sense of height. The low chair rail is part of the strategy; so is a subtle cloud ceiling. Portrait busts represent a great-great-grandmother and her sister. Regency furniture is a family favorite, here including sideboard, chairs, plant stand in the window.



TOWERING VISIONS

Louis Sullivan gave American architecture a self-reliant spirit that looked inward rather than abroad

BY MARTIN FILLER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY CERVIN ROBINSON



Adler and Sullivan's Guaranty Building of 1894–95 in Buffalo, *thesis paper*, is a classic of early skyscraper design. It demonstrates Sullivan's tall-building formula, dividing the tower into base, shaft, and crown.





Louis Sullivan in front of the vacation house he built for himself in Ocean Springs, Mississippi, in 1890.

During the ascendance of the International Style, Louis Henri Sullivan was revered as "the father of the skyscraper." It was a dubious designation at best, in that the quintessential American building type cannot be attributed to a single originator. But Sullivan's opulent and inventive ornament, which orthodox Modernists tried to turn a blind eye to even while admiring his more "progressive" contributions, have made him a hero once again. Today, a new generation that rejects the International Style's interdict on applied decoration correctly appreciates Sullivan as one of the most brilliant ornamentalists of all time.

It is precisely that contradictory component in his outlook that makes Sullivan's architecture so appealing to a diverse audience today. Those dissonances between the rational and emotional in Sullivan's designs mark him as a truly American creator, for our most characteristic artists have invariably displayed a duality of impulses—the romantic versus the pragmatic, the venal versus the idealistic, the populist versus the elitist—which in Louis Sullivan were abundantly intermingled. Sullivan's life and career ended badly, but his principles and talent remained intact—indeed transcendent—until the very last.

Unlike the attention prompted by an artist's death or a major anniversary, the renewed and growing interest in the architecture of Louis Sullivan stems from an understandable desire to reexamine his supremely successful resolution of problems very similar to our own. Among them are the artful design of the tall building, at which he excelled without peer; the evolution of new decorative motifs, at which he was also unequaled; the ability to invest successive commissions in the same building type with conceptual freshness and consistent quality; a responsiveness to regional building traditions and a willingness to learn from and adapt to them; and, above all, an insistence on the proper use of historical



precedent. He saw the architect first and foremost as "a poet and an interpreter of the national life of his time" and cautioned, in his typically outspoken way, that the "fraudulent and surreptitious use of historical documents, however suavely presented, however cleverly plagiarized, however neatly repacked . . . will be held to be a betrayal of trust."

Sullivan's most famous, and most misunderstood, precept is "form follows function." By this he did not mean, as some fundamentalist Modernists have understood it, that only the strictly functional in architecture ought to be allowed formal expression. Far from it, for as he elaborated on his credo in *The Autobiography of an Idea*, "The vital idea was this: That the function *created* or organized form."

But hand in hand with that theoretical notion went Sullivan's keen social instinct, and it is that which made his architecture such an extraordinary evocation of its time and place. He believed that "what people are within, the buildings express without; and inversely, what the buildings are objectively is a sure index of what people are subjectively." How that can be conveyed in architecture he saw as no great mystery either. As he wrote, "Once you learn to look upon architecture not merely as an art more or less well or more or less badly done, but as a *social manifestation*, the criti-

The eight small banks erected to Sullivan's designs in small towns in the Midwest late in his career form one of the greatest series in the history of that building type. *Opposite above:* Farmers & Merchants Union Bank, Columbus, Wisconsin, 1919–20. *Above:* The People's Federal Savings & Loan Association, Sidney, Ohio, 1917–18. *Below:* National Farmers' Bank, Owatonna, Minnesota, 1906–08.





cal eye becomes clairvoyant, and obscure, unnoted phenomena become illumined." And so they did for Sullivan, but the extent to which his enlightened vision diverged from that of most of his contemporaries is the root cause of his professional decline.

Louis Henri Sullivan was born in Boston in 1856, five years before the start of the Civil War, to an Irish immigrant father and a Swiss French mother. His aesthetic responses to the world around him were finely attuned from an early age, and his awareness of those factors in his formation as an artist is amply recalled in his autobiography. By the time he was twelve years old, Louis was so determined in his "heart's desire" to become an architect that he



Efflorescent ornament gives Sullivan's work a decorative richness unsurpassed in American architecture. *Opposite:* Overdoor, National Farmers' Bank, Owatonna, Minnesota, 1906–08. *Above:* Baluster, Chicago Stock Exchange, 1893. *Right:* Façade, Schlesinger & Mayer (now Carson Pirie Scott) store, Chicago, 1899, 1902–03.



Adler and Sullivan's most ambitious commission was the Auditorium Building of 1886–90 in Chicago, a mixed-use structure incorporating a 4,200-seat concert hall, *above*, a hotel, offices, and shops. *Right:* The vigorously rusticated granite base of the Congress Parkway façade.

decided to remain with his grandparents near Boston (where educational possibilities were greater) rather than join his parents on their move to Chicago.

At sixteen the precocious boy entered the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, but after only a year he left to join the firm of Frank Furness in Philadelphia. Furness employed all the most prevalent Victorian design motifs of his day—the gables, the turrets, the patterned shingles, the crockets and finials we associate with that style—but recombined them with such surprise and forcefulness that the result was an architecture of spectacular uniqueness. Sullivan's own confident handling of both mass and detail in his later work certainly bears the stamp of the Furness approach, though it was as free from direct imitation as the work of the elder. Sullivan remained in Philadelphia only a matter of months, and then took off for Chicago, where he worked for half a year in the office of William Le Baron Jenney, an early exponent of the skyscaper.

Architectural education

(Text continued on page 233)





A STABLE WAY OF LIFE

Twin houses decorated by Pauline Boardman continue a family heritage on Long Island

BY WILLIAM P. RAYNER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICK HALES



The original stables, *above,* have been converted into the living room and children's quarters. *Right:* The painting by James Barenger above the fireplace in the living room is part of Pauline Boardman's collection of dogs in art. Wood crest carpet from Stark; needlepoint rug, Eleanor Jones; all fabrics from Brunschwig & Fils.





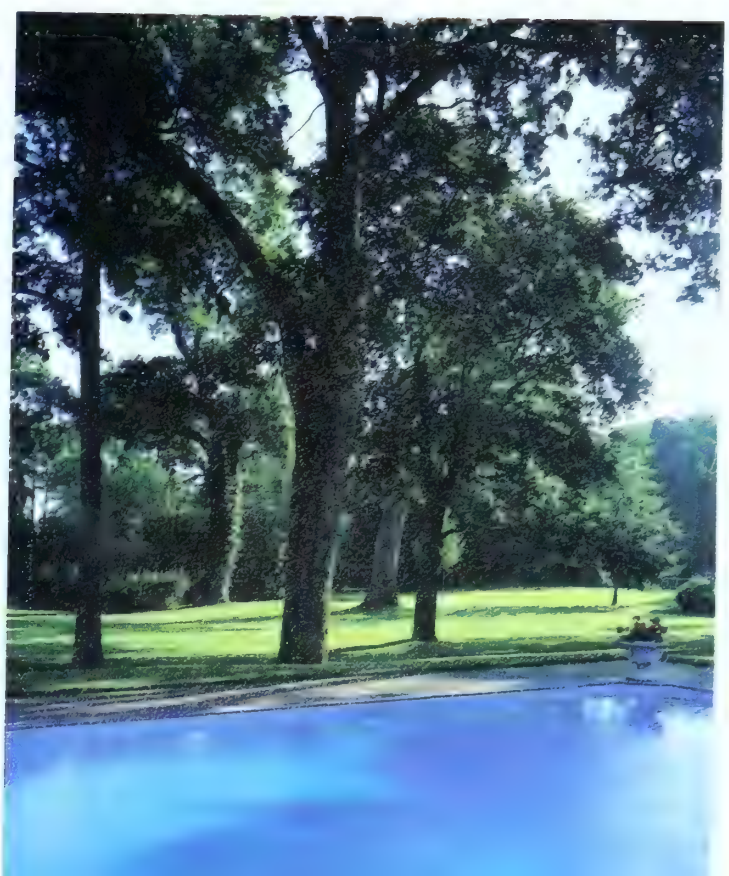
In a welcoming corner of the living room, *opposite above,* new bookcases add architectural interest. Marlborough striped wallpaper from Cowtan & Tout. *Above:* A still life of family and dogs. Long Island Sound seen from the pool, *below,* and the park, with its enormous old oaks, *opposite below,* are just two small views of a large and lovely landscape.



Pauline Boardman, who has her own decorating firm, believes in mixing the old with the new, so when she and her husband, Dixon, returned from England ten years ago she applied the principle to house-hunting. What they purchased were the stables that her grandmother had built in 1912 together with the mirror-image addition across the gravel-covered courtyard, built some sixteen years later as a guesthouse. That was the new part. The old part was the park in which these houses rested, its two-hundred-year-old oak trees shading acres of intensely green lawn that bow gently down to Long Island Sound. Pauline maintains that "perhaps the most unselfish act one can perform is to plant trees that grow to this colossal size when you know you will never see them in all their grandeur, but of which your children or grandchildren or somebody will become the beneficiaries." Of course, her whole approach toward rehabilitating and decorating her twin houses, which are as symmetrical as a pair of deers' antlers, has the aura of unselfishness—of giving. Almost every summer weekend the house is filled with friends and children and dogs, none of whom seem to have the least inclination to stray from the property; and why should they? There is the rectangular pool and the urns on its corners overflowing with geraniums that look to be straight out of Thornton's *Temple of Flora,* there is the tennis court for the more actively inclined, or the Boston Whaler for the nautical, and the breakwater down by the Sound off which a fellow can fish (it was built from the granite drilled out to make room for the New York City subway system back in the 1880s), and then there are the picnics, the cookouts, the bridge games, and if none of these are to your taste, just grab a book and go hide down by the kitchen garden or the cutting garden and take a nap.

The architect of these sturdy built-for-all-seasons Federal houses was Pauline's great-uncle Stewart Gillette, who was married to one of her grandmother's four sisters. In the winter the living room, which was converted from the old laundry in the stables building, is cozy and warmed by great open fireplaces with chintz-covered overstuffed sofas and chairs that you can sink into up to your chin. During the summer the win- *(Text continued on page 232)*









The small dining room in the main house, *above,* has a Rosecore carpet; blue-and-white chintz from Colefax & Fowler. From the pool, a view of the twin buildings, *left.* The original guesthouse (near) holds the sitting and dining rooms, and master bedroom. The former stables (far) also once housed the laundry.



Over the mantel in the bedroom, *above,* is a gouache by Maud Marshall. Rag rug from the Gazebo. All fabric from Cowtan & Tout. *Right:* In the paneled sitting room, a sisal rug from Rosecore, chintz and solid fabric from Colefax & Fowler at Clarence House, fabric on slipper chairs, Cowtan & Tout.





Magnolia grandiflora

THE FLOWER PORTRAITS OF MRS. DELANY

BY RUTH HAYDEN

"I have bungled out a horse chestnut blossom that would do well in a lady's cap," wrote the observant Mrs. Delany to Lady Andover in June 1776. This was a modest reference to one of Mrs. Delany's remarkable pictures of plants created in paper collage between 1772 and 1782. These flower pictures of breathtaking beauty and botanical accuracy could only be achieved by one who paid the finest attention to detail in cutting the varying shades of papers necessary to imitate each minute particle of the plant, and who had, beyond a liking for flowers, a botanical knowledge of the highest order. For Mrs. Delany had, in ten years, created nearly a thousand plant pictures in paper collage by the time she was 82 years old. Her paper herbarium brought her the admiration of such eminent men as Sir Joshua Reynolds, Sir Joseph Banks the explorer and botanist, and two onetime prime ministers, Lord Bute and Lord Rockingham. George III and Queen Charlotte were constant visitors and admirers of her "paper mosaicks," as Mrs. Delany called them. One hundred and ten of them on loan from the British Museum will be exhibited at New York's Pierpont Morgan Library from September 2 through November 2.



The skills which Mrs. Delany needed to create in her old age such a superb collection of plants in paper were laid in early childhood. Mary Granville, born into an aristocratic English family in 1700, started cutting designs in paper before she was eight years old. In her teens, when living at Buckland Manor (now a hotel) in the beautiful Cotswolds, she was decorating her own room with designs she'd cut in paper. "I took great delight in a little closet I had, which was furnished with little drawings and cut paper of my own doing," she wrote. Later one of these designs was found under the pillow of a dying and rejected suitor.

As her skills progressed, she cut silhouettes of family groups, depicting players at a game of chess, a lady working at her tambour, and children at play.

An arranged marriage, when Mary Granville was seventeen years old, to Mr. Alexander Pendarves, aged sixty, was a most unhappy period of six to seven years before she was widowed. She was supported in those sad years by her enjoyment of needlework, which she did while sitting at the bedside of her ailing husband, using flowers as the subject of her exquisite embroidery.

It is her own court dress in black silk which she designed and embroidered herself with hundreds of flowers that shows her needlework in its greatest beauty. It is typical of the style of the mid eighteenth century. A stomacher of black velvet forming the front bodice is composed of pinks and lily-of-the-valley. The overskirt, with its 230 small flowers edged with a rococo border of a chain of small flowers, has a *(Text continued on page 236)*

Portrait of Mary Delany by John Opie from The National Portrait Gallery, London



Helianthus annus,
Great Sunflower

Æsculus Hippocastanum,
Horse Chestnut

Passiflora Laurifolia,
Bay leav'd



Carduus nutans,
Musk or Nodding Thistle



Cactus Grandiflorus,
Melon Thistle

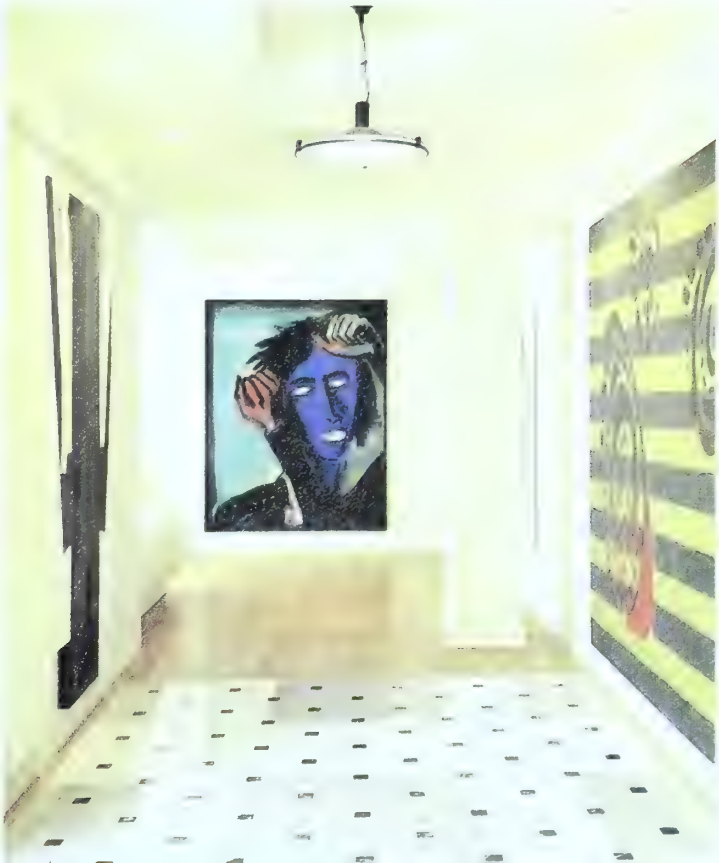


TRANSFORMED FOR ART

Lee Mindel and Peter Shelton update a Park Avenue apartment for young collectors

BY HEATHER SMITH MACISAAC
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JEFF MCNAMARA





Granite "credenza," *opposite,* anchors the void created by the architects to allow a view to the outside from the front door. *Above:* New light gray walls form a modern gallery within the old apartment. Paintings, left to right, are by Gary Stephan, Peter Schuyff, and Nino Longobardi; chairs are turn-of-the-century Austrian. *Left:* In foyer, granite and marble floor, set into the wood like a carpet, reflects ceiling grid devised to mask lighting and irregularities of existing beams. Facing entry, *Blue Head* by Helmut Middendorf.





Gallery spills over into kitchen, *below*. On far wall, *Big Splash* by Dieter Hacker. *Above:* Dense and liberated checkerboard floor-tile patterns identify work and play zones. *Right:* A thick "slice of sky" draws the eye gracefully past an existing column. *Opposite above:* Chunky granite sink and tub are balanced by granite "horizon" in the master bathroom. *Opposite below:* In hall, a writing table designed by Frank Lloyd Wright for the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo.





No one more acutely pinpoints the current trend of acquiring art collections overnight and by the yard than Woody Allen with *Hannah and Her Sisters:* young rock star visits the studio of aging artist and returns to his limo in a snit because the artist's small pictures were a waste of invaluable time.

It is refreshing, then, to see two collectors who, though young, spent ten years thoughtfully putting together a collection, first of furniture, then of paintings, *before* turning their attention to housing it. Bypassing the most voguish art container—a loft—Arthur and Pamela Sanders bought an old-fashioned, spacious Park Avenue apartment because, in Arthur's words, "though our collection is important to us, at this point in our lives [just last year they became parents] we are more interested in having a home than a showcase"; and to them, an apartment, with its intimacy and variety of spaces, meant home.

Their new apartment offered a bright *(Text continued on page 231)*





ESTANCIA LA FAVORITA

How Alberto Pinto helped reclaim our 1806 farm in Argentina

BY JEAN-PIERRE MARCIE-RIVIÈRE PHOTOGRAPHS BY KAREN RADKAI



The entrance hall, with its pink Portuguese marble floor, is dominated by a tall ceramic stove made by Swiss artisans in southern Argentina. Next to it, a 17th-century French chair with its original tapestry, and an 18th-century German eagle.







The die was cast in November of 1981 when, after a week in Argentina, my wife, Rosemarie, and I agreed that in this beautiful country we would have a house where we could spend time in *their* summers to shorten *our* winters. One must remember that in the southern hemisphere the seasons are reversed and that Christmas, for instance, is in summer.

For several years we had been traveling, looking for a place with a pleasant warm climate in winter. We had seen quite a few tempting spots in different countries but only here did we feel that we had actually found it. It was not just a resort—even in the most beautiful one may get bored after a while—but "the real thing," with breathtakingly vast landscapes, not far from either the sea or the mountains, a lively capital, an active cultural life (opera, concerts, theaters), and a charming and sophisticated "society."

When we started our search, we decided that the ideal for us would be to settle not farther than one or two hours' drive from Buenos Aires. We hoped to find in a large park an existing house, colonial if possible, which we would remodel if necessary. I also

Jean-Pierre and Rosemarie Marcie-Rivière, *above. Left:* A remarkable 18th-century Bessarabian carpet sets the mood for the living room's décor. Exotic birds by the 18th-century French painter Desportes flank the mantel with its 17th-century French silver chargers. Nuremberg and Augsburg silver *objets de vertu;* silvered eagle from a Neapolitan royal palace. Sofas designed by Alberto Pinto.



The park scenes on the dining-room walls, painted by the contemporary French artist Jean Dumas, duplicate precisely the views through its windows. English table silver in the George II style includes a remarkable and rare pivoting food warmer and server.





The Hispano-Arabic-style pavilion by the swimming pool, *above*, is a frequent party setting. *Below* The walls of the television room are covered in Braconnier fabric. Victorian chairs from Loots in London.





The tile panel of Saint Francis preaching to the animals in the chapel, *above,* is probably 19th century. The 18th-century crucifix is Spanish. *Below:* The back of the house looks out on a field of agapanthus.





The blue-and-white *azulejos, above,* for all the bathrooms were designed by the owner of the house. The crystal appliques are 19th-century French. *Below:* An early-19th-century *azulejo* panel commemorating the owners and architects of the estancia. *Opposite:* All of the bedroom's flower-dappled fabrics were designed by Hubert de Givenchy. The table in the foreground holds pieces from the owners' collections of Murano glass and 18th-century Meissen porcelain.

wanted surrounding acreage on which I could grow or raise something and keep myself busy.

For more than a year we saw grand French eighteenth-century-style houses, "Renaissance" chateaux de la Loire, Normandy villas, Tudor castles . . . not for us. Until one day when we were shown an old photograph of a house that looked too good to be true. We were leaving for Europe the next day but, as we loved the picture, we managed to drive and see. It was only an hour and a half from Buenos Aires all right, but what a spectacle once we got there!

The history of the cattle-breeding estancia formerly called La Elvira begins in 1806, old by Argentine standards. It was bought in 1910 by an



Argentine family of Portuguese origin. Between 1925 and 1929, helped by a famous architect of the time, they extended and radically transformed the house in the colonial Portuguese style.

Later the charming lady who inherited it disliked the country life immensely and let the place go to ruin. What we could see, as we arrived there, was a park right out of *Sleeping Beauty,* beautiful old trees caught in a wild tangle of bushes and cows grazing everywhere. The roofs were crumbling, the walls stained with humidity. We ate lunch in a dark room strewn with cans to collect the water dripping from the ceiling. Despite all this, it was love at first sight. We had to have it and bought it on the spot.

La Favorita, as Rosemarie renamed it, would be a fresh-looking house, with light paint and cotton fabrics on the walls, white lacquered floors in every bedroom and bathroom, white with shades of peach-color Portuguese marble *(Text continued on page 218)*



ESTANCIA LA FAVORITA

(*Continued from page 210*) in the hall (to replace the dark tiles), bigger windows (without altering the outside architecture). We would add a dining room (great) onto the garden and more bathrooms. We would double the size of the kitchen. We would rebuild the swimming pool, the pool house, the stables, and the doll house. We would build tennis courts, clay pigeon shoot, etc. . . . As for the furniture, we would mix seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries as if a family had lived and collected there for generations.

We already knew whom we would ask to do the renovation. At a weekend party we had met an enthusiastic young engineer, José Maria Garcia Calvo. He and his talented young wife, Josefina,



Espuelas, the gaucho's silver stirrups

with their efficient assistants were eager to help in any way possible. The challenge of bringing back life and beauty to a decaying house thrilled them.

The decorator would have to be somebody who knew us, our tastes, our demands and . . . spoke Spanish. Alberto Pinto satisfied all the requirements. He came and loved the project. Within a week we made all the major decisions. Back in Paris, Pinto drew all the sketches and plans we needed, inspired by colonial Spanish and Portuguese documents, and we chose the fabrics together. He only had to come back three times, such was the understanding between him, the Garcia Calvos, and ourselves.

Although we were able to move into the house after eighteen months and have the housewarming party after two years, we worked happily together on the house for three years. □

A FINE GATHERING

(*Continued from page 126*) French partner, who's much more serious than I am," Denning recalls, "couldn't believe his eyes when he saw Carroll downtown in one of those junk shops. She's rather unafraid.")

Too sophisticated, perhaps, for most Americans in the fifties, this style of accumulation now enjoys wide acceptance. So does the extensive use Easton has made here of *faux* stone, marble, and mahogany. ("Much chicer than the real thing," he comments. "Chicer than the *new* real thing," Hampton qualifies dryly. "Seventeen sixty English mahogany, on the other hand, can be quite pleasurable.")

Of course, most of the things that Mrs. Petrie has assembled here are not only authentic but also very good indeed, embracing a range of historical sympathies that extends, roughly speaking, from the Régence to the Regency. Regardless of their specific period, her choices—unlike the clients' acquisitions with which decorators are so often faced—all possess a professional's robust sense of scale. ("It belies her fragility," Denning comments. "A world-class shopper," Easton adds.)

"I got loose one day at an auction," she explains of a superb Russian chandelier in the dining room. Several other of her finds, like the Régence console in the entrance hall, came from the great Godmersham Park sale in England several years ago. As for the Regency chairs in the library, she and Hampton found them the same day on independent visits to a New York sale. ("I hope they're the ones with the ladies on the arms," he remembers saying to her on the telephone at the time.) Then there was a pair of George III satinwood bookcases for the living room. Neither Easton nor Mrs. Petrie can recall who deserves the credit for them. "We found them almost simultaneously," she says. "One of us saw them in the store and the other saw them in an advertisement. . . ."

Just now, Milton Petrie arrives home for lunch, as he does every day. "Gruff" and "crusty" are the clichés that come to mind to describe him, but neither does justice to his genuine geniality. "I'm thrilled to death about it," he says of the apartment. "But what do I know?" he adds. "Listen, you want to hear the story about the bookcases? We're in London, right? I wake up one morning at the Connaught Hotel and Carroll comes in, says, 'Sweetheart, dear. . .'"

His wife laughs in reminiscence.

"'. . . right around the corner there're a couple of bookcases I'd appreciate your seeing. . . .'"

"In Mallett's," Mrs. Petrie specifies.

"And she said, 'I've got it all prepared for you.' So we go down, I see the bookcases and, frankly, I wouldn't give you five thousand dollars for 'em. I absolutely wouldn't. Well, what they wanted I won't tell you, it was so ridiculous. But I started negotiating with the guy. And then he said, 'I positively could not go any further.' So I said, 'OK, wrap 'em up!'"

"My husband's manner of purchasing things is very decisive," Mrs. Petrie explains to their interlocutor. "Either 'that's it,' or it's not. I know him well enough not to push."

"All I do is go along with anything she wants to buy," the tycoon argues equably. "You call that being decisive? *She's* the decisive one."

("All this from a Baptist from South Carolina," Easton remembers her saying soon after they met.)

"It seems to me that Southerners don't give up very easily," Mrs. Petrie says somewhat abstractly. "They don't compromise and they don't give up. As the expression goes today, they 'hang in there.' They have determination." □

Editor: Jacqueline Gonnet

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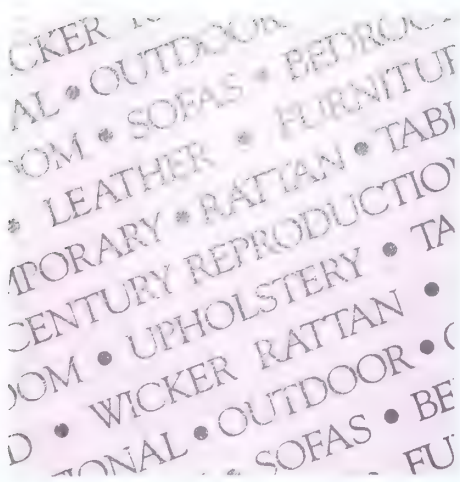
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(Continued from page 176) state of Pernambuco came the chance to create gardens based on native plants. And the realization that to do so he would have to find them for himself: nurseries offered almost none. In the company of the distinguished botanist Hènrique de Lahmeyer Mello Baretto he began to explore his country, bringing back plants from the wild, learning how to grow them and design with them. Over the course of time Burle Marx has become himself a botanist of considerable distinction, although he would disclaim it. He has discovered more than a hundred new plants and, the ultimate honor that botanists can give a peer, had at least seventeen species named after him, as well as a genus. He regularly leads expeditions into different regions—the Amazon jungle, the swamps of the Pantanal, the grasslands of the Mato Grosso, the dry Sertão of the northeast.

In fact, it is hard for Burle Marx to look at previously unvisited land without wanting to explore it. When we accompanied him on his first trip to the site of a newly commissioned garden, it was clear that he would have liked to take off into the virgin forest around it and "make an excursion to find plants because it is very seldom here in Brazil that you don't find something. Many times I don't know the plant and sometimes it is new for science even. In the United States and England people know what they have in nature, but here, having over five thousand different species of trees alone, it is quite difficult, so I will probably come back here with a botanist to help me." Calling in a botanist is not just to satisfy his own curiosity. If there are local plants that can be used in the design he will use them as a way of linking the garden to its surroundings. Burle Marx never hesitates to draw on the knowledge of any expert who can contribute to a project, and often functions as the director of a team of architects, botanists, horticulturists, engineers, stonemasons, and gardeners.

But satisfying his curiosity would not be frivolous. Brazil's vast and barely examined botanical treasury—according to Simon Mayo of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew there are probably more than 50,000 plant species in Brazil, while the whole of Europe has about 11,500—is threatened by careless and insensitive development. Much of Burle Marx's time and energy for the past fifteen years has been spent in trying to awaken his countrymen to the destruction of their patrimony and its implications for their economic future and the quality of their lives. "People are so uneducated. Nature is always destroyed in the name of progress. Nature is a cycle of life that you must understand in order to take liberties with it in good conscience. The means at our disposal, like the great bulldozers, fire, defoliants, can be just as well used for good as for evil, but in Brazil they are used to create misery."

He sometimes says he is tired of fighting but he continues to speak out, and to press the government for national parks. Whenever you go anywhere with him he is quick to point out the results of ill-judged land-clearing or plant introductions. And he continues to gather specimens for the extensive botanical gardens he has created on his estate, the Sitio Santo Antonio da Bica, south of Rio. Here he both grows material for his gardens—nurseries still offer too little variety—and maintains a research collection. Important as the collection is for students, many botanists feel that it is still more important for preserving species that may already have been lost in the wild. It is a great source of pleasure to them as it is to him that the Brazilian government has recently agreed to take over the sitio as a center for botanical research after his death.

Not all the plants at the sitio are native, however. "I don't say that in my gardens I don't plant foreign plants; I do. But they must fit to our landscape. It is important that a garden is a result of our existing landscape and our flora. But, for example, here is a palm from Madagascar. It is fantastic on account of the distribution of the leaves and I think it is worthwhile to plant. We have so many palms here that it does not destroy the balance in the landscape. And I have to borrow to have plants that will blossom in beds." But even these he seems to choose as much for foliage as for flowers.

When Burle Marx composes a garden it is the textures, colors, and shapes of the leaves, the forms of the plants, that are fundamental. In a lecture, "The Garden as a Form of Art," he speaks vividly of his approach to planting.

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One may think of a plant as a note. Played in one chord, it will sound in a particular way; in another chord, its value will be altered. A plant is a form, a color, a texture, a scent, a living being with needs and preferences, with personality of its own. Planted alone in grass it will have one value; in a group, among rocks, among differently textured leaves, in a bed of color, it will have another. One may think of a plant as a sculpture, to be seen from many different angles: to be transformed by a gust of wind from tranquil green to a dancing figure of silver-backed leaves; to be spangled by the sun after a sudden shower. One may think of a plant as a brushstroke, as a single stitch of embroidery; but one must never forget that it is an individual. One must try always to make it look as much like itself as possible.

"One can do this by contrast, in color if you like; coleus, for instance, yellow and purple, but united by their leaf form, leaf texture, and by their height. Or three kinds of grass of different length and color but of similar texture. Or there are what I call analogies—leaves of similar shape but different colors and textures—as of hemerocallis planted with neomarica, or kniphofia, or *Iris sibirica;* or of a similar texture, but different color and size, as heliconia and ravenala—here too, there is an analogy of form. Then there is repetition—of a color, silver agave planted beside a silver acacia; of a form, different kinds of palms used in the same way. In the creation of nature, there is no such thing as an ugly plant; but by placing them wrongly, by ignoring their character, plants can be made to appear ugly."

Although he speaks less of flower color, Burle Marx does not dismiss flowers—"like water, they bring life to a garden"—but they are accents, brilliant and transient. In one season a courtyard planted with frangipanis glows yellow, orange, and pink, but when the flowers and even the leaves are gone the essence of the design—the graceful lines of trunk and branch, the patterned bark—remains. Water plays many parts in his compositions, flowing in natural-seeming streams and lakes, or confined in crisply edged pools, sometimes biomorphic, sometimes geometric in shape. It may serve as a mirror drawing the sky and distant mountains into the center of the garden or as a platform for a piece of sculpture. It may sparkle down a granite wall or rise in jets to create "liquid sculpture."

Just as protean is the role of light. "It is the constant change, the capriciousness of light that makes the landscape gardener's work so difficult—and satisfying. A poor painting, cunningly hung, can be made to appear handsome; a bad sculpture can be placed in the one position in which it looks well. But a careless form, an ill-considered volume will show up at once in a garden with a change in the light: the sun is very indiscreet. It can transfer in a moment the attention from some carefully planned point of focus to a shabby, ragged, disregarded group of shrubs.

"In different parts of the world it changes; it is the master touch of Nature that suits her colors to her light. In the summer in Brazil, when the light is blue and brilliant we find flowering together the cassia and the tibouchina, rich yellow and hot purple, suspended in a sea of saturated greens, so deep that they are almost black. In Japan where the light is grayer, we have in spring the pure whites and luscious pinks of the cherries, in autumn the clear scarlets and yellows of the maples, underlined and thrown into relief by the darkness of pines. In the Alpine springs in Europe, when the light is liquid and a pure, pale lilac, the flowers are white, pale yellow, paler pink, mauve, and intense blue, cradled in the soft brilliance of new grass. One can only look, and feel humble. Out of their context, these leaves, these flowers can be made to look vulgar or anemic; within it they have the perfection of simplicity."

Sensitively adjusted as they are to their surroundings and the ecological requirements of the plants in them, Burle Marx's gardens are not naturalistic in the sense that we usually use the word. His designs are highly controlled, and their kinship to modern painting is both apparent and intended, as he has acknowledged. "For me, the constant interest of landscape gar-



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doing has been in reflecting the aesthetic feelings of my age in terms of plastic composition—shape, space, form, volume; and I can largely explain my approach as the result of the impact on my generation of Cubism and Abstractionism. I decided to use natural topography as a field of work and the elements of nature, mineral and vegetable, as materials for the plastic construction, as other artists worked on canvas with paint and brush."

As a painter who turned to landscape design, he joins distinguished company. André LeNôtre and William Kent were both trained as painters and Humphrey Repton built his career on his skill as a watercolorist. Burle Marx has never given up paint, brush, and canvas, however. Internationally his paintings, drawings, and prints are less known, but in his own country they are highly respected and collected. Painting and garden-making seem to be mutually nourishing activities for him. One can see in the dense and complex patterning of his canvases abstractions of the forms of nature—leaves, branches, roots, bark—as one can see in some of his pools and plant beds analogies to the shapes of the mountains around Rio and the clean sweeping curves of the beaches or the sinuous interlacing of river and island that make up the Brazilian coastline from the air. And, whether he is working on a two-dimensional canvas or three-dimensional landscape, there is an ever-present exploration of the fourth dimension of time, of movement through space in forms composed from multiple points of view. But if one can see the same sensibility at work in both it is misleading to press the relationship between his paintings and his landscape designs too far. The latter are far from being paintings laid on the ground—a criticism sometimes voiced by those who know the gardens only from photographs. Some of his gardens, particularly those for city spaces with their patterned pavements and shapely masses of colored foliage, are so strong graphically that photographing them from straight overhead is irresistible. And since they are meant to be seen from the windows of skyscrapers, legitimate. But only half the design. The differing levels, the careful organization of space, the rhythmic placement of verticals that make the garden equally rewarding to the ground-level viewer are lost.

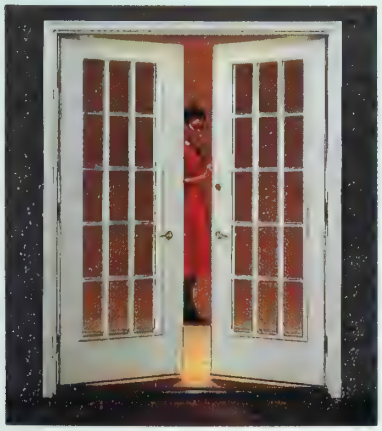
The need to reconcile bird's-eye and eye-level perspective in a design is a problem peculiar to modern cities and one that Burle Marx has addressed repeatedly since his famous gardens—now being restored—for the Ministry of Education and Health in 1938. A more complex design for a more complicated site is the recent—1982—garden for the Banco Safra in São Paulo, a skyscraper poised on concrete pilotis mid-block between two streets at different elevations. From the higher street steps wind down through narrow, rather informally planted concrete beds on different levels to a bold mosaic pavement in red, black, gray, and white. Geometric under the building, the pattern gains curves as it passes out into an open plaza at the opposite end. Here it is punctuated with tall columns wrapped in tree-fern fiber and planted with colorful epiphytic bromeliads or philodendrons. The plant beds, integrated into the paving pattern, are raised to sitting height with concrete curbs wide enough to sit on—and sat on they are. Sculptured concrete walls, with projecting planting beds and inset panels of fern-fiber for tapestries of epiphytes, enclose the property on both sides, screening out neighboring structures and providing a background of patterns and textures overlaid with moving patterns of light and shade. Experiencing the Banco Safra garden validates Sir Geoffrey Jellicoe's observation about Burle Marx's early work: "...certainly these gardens are designed for people themselves in motion. It is not only that the lines of the gardens are rhythmic in themselves, but they seem to be so partly in response to movement in the beholder, a symptom of the restless energy of the age in which we live."

The assumption that gardens are created in response to human needs—utilitarian, social, aesthetic—is basic to Burle Marx's thinking, but he feels equally strongly that "the first impression should be of a beautiful garden. The function of a garden should be contained within its beauty—it must not *only* be suited to its function."

When you analyze one of his gardens you usually find that the practical and the aesthetic are inextricably intertwined. Bromeliad towers, to take one example, are at once a way to achieve a tall volume in a place where there is no earth to support a tall tree—a parking garage underlies the Banco Safra plaza—and so relate the garden to the architecture around it: their skyscraper shapes are no accident. Relating the garden—public or private—to its surroundings is a paramount concern. In his famous 1948 garden for Odette Monteiro, which fills a valley in Petropolis, the shapes of the beds echo the encircling mountains; in the Nininha Magalhaes Lins garden, the plants and shrubs at the edges are carefully orchestrated to merge imperceptibly into the forest beyond. In small private gardens, especially in a country where walled gardens are traditional and a societal necessity, the challenge would seem the opposite and Burle Marx uses a variety of devices—vine-covered fences, pergolas, judiciously placed trees, in addition to decorative walls of tile or stone—to screen the garden from its immediate neighbors. But even here he usually manages to open at least one vista to the greater landscape beyond. Nature in Brazil is very helpful to him when it comes to borrowing scenery: few places have so many dramatic mountains conveniently to hand.

Given the space at the designer's disposal, composing the needs and wishes of private clients—flowers, trees, lawns, easy maintenance, swimming pools, terraces, play spaces, often all at once—into a work of art is an almost greater challenge than the creation of one from a public park. The Magalhaes Lins garden even includes a golf course. "If they love golf," with a little shrug of the shoulders, "well, it is a problem to solve. And the green with a certain quality of sand accentuates certain parts as a sculpture you can see in different profiles."

To his clients he brings not just sympathy and a real interest in understanding their point of view but considerable educational skill in making them see his. To his projects he brings a knowledge of garden design through history that is both wide-ranging and profound. He often speaks, in particular, of the impact made on him by the English landscape style as he first saw it interpreted in Brazil, an impact deepened by later visits to the landscapes created by Kent, Repton, and the designer he most admires, Capability Brown. But he is equally apt to draw on Brazil's Portuguese garden heritage.



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ARTIST OF THE GARDEN

The stone mosaics that he uses to bring to life city plazas and pavements are derived from a technique that goes back to Roman Portugal, as do the *canteiros*—watertight compartments for earth and plants placed in pools—that he uses to keep water plants within the strict outlines of a design. And the colorful glazed tile walls that often appear in his gardens "have very much to do with the Portuguese tradition. To understand the traditions of a country is very important because then you can use, but in a different way, something that belongs to your tradition.

"All the gardens I see are important as inspiration in future gardens because I find always something that I can take. I will say like Picasso, 'It's better to copy other people than to copy always ourselves.' "

Like all creators, Burle Marx has projects he would rather not remember. And not just because they were not carried out as he planned or neglected or spoiled by insensitive changes: sometimes experiments have not worked. But he continues to experiment—"curiosity never lets me alone"—and defends experimentation as the only way to grow.

"When I began to create gardens it was quite difficult because I wanted to use everything I knew, but now sometimes when I begin a garden I think of Mies van der Rohe saying, 'Minus is more.' And that Capability Brown created a marvelous garden with only eight kinds of trees."

Somehow all the history, all the inspirations, all the influences—and many more could be mentioned—all the enormous vocabulary of plants are distilled, sorted, blended, and filtered into a powerful original and individual style, which like all great styles can be learned from but not imitated. Inevitably Buffon's aphorism "Style is the man himself" comes to mind, but perhaps the last word should be left to a Rio taxi driver: "Burle Marx? He is very famous, very loved." □

GREEK REVIVAL ON FRENCH PRAIRIE

(Continued from page 146) his purchase of the house, offered to sell him another bed and chest of drawers that had belonged to William and Sarah Case. In a final charming gesture, when she moved to smaller quarters, this generous lady gave him the rest of her collection of Case furniture—all in golden bird's-eye and tiger-striped maple, absolutely perfect in these small sunny bedrooms that glow on a bright day.

Wildflowers still carpet the prairies, and on Saturdays Mirza talks to the sheep and cows who come to greet her as she stops along the roadside to gather field flowers for her weekly bouquets. Lupine, wild asters, oxeye and Michaelmas daisies, goldenrod, tansy, poppies the color of carrots, columbine, and great sheafs of Queen Anne's lace all blend in the rare Oregon pots that Wallace collects. Brown and cream, reminiscent of venerable Chinese egg jars, the pots were made downriver, at the old red kilns in Buena Vista, by the Chinese—who came to build the railroads and stayed on, establishing potteries to continue a craft handed down from their ancestors.

Surrounding the house, the long colonnaded porches become additional rooms—shaded, cool, and one with nature. Wallace and Mirza find nothing more comforting and nostalgic than relaxing on the back porch with a glass of Gravenstein apple cider hand-crushed in their antique cider press. Wafts of appealing scents, natural vistas, and the low crackle and rumble of unseen creatures help make time roll backward.

The view across the slate-paved courtyard conjures up a mix of moods further inspired by the pungent smell of woolly thyme and creeping French tarragon bruised underfoot, English lavender and spearmint rubbed against in passing. The field noises rise in a crescendo of buzzing, and the broad vista continues across the courtyard to the fruit-laden orchard silhouetted in front of dark banks of evergreens edging the ravine to the west. Everything seems very close to the way it was when, undaunted, that first Case family turned their neoclassic dream into a reality. □

(Continued from page 157)

Lagerfeld's gift for subtle evocation is ideally revealed in his Roman house. At first glance, the two-story mid-seventeenth-century building was, as he puts it, "a little nothing, a *petite bicoque* at the back of the *cour-jardin.*" The courtyard leads into a *vicolo,* one of those narrow lanes typical of Rome's historical center, and the *vicolo* in turn, leads into a piazza. The imposing Palazzo Borghese stands close by.

It was the neighborhood, not the house, that first encouraged Lagerfeld's inspiration: "I thought immediately of the Nordic artists [Scandinavian and German] who lived in Rome [late eighteenth to mid nineteenth century]. I said to myself that the only thing I could do was to transform the place into a painter's studio." And he specifies, "I don't mean a true painter, but a dilettante, a painter of sorts."

He wanted the mood of the house to suggest an idealized bohemia. "But," in Karl's words, "one doesn't want to live like Mimi and Rudolfo." Karl believes in friendly and elegant ghosts. The one he conjured up here is that of an affluent *amateur* of the neoclassical age, a man with a decidedly Nordic sensibility who would have read Goethe and embarked upon an Italian journey of his own.

"I wanted the house to have a Nordic flavor, a touch of puritanism," he says. "Northern Europeans have always been equivocal, ambiguous toward Italy. It both fascinates and frightens them."

Accordingly, the house quietly shuts itself off from its Italian context. A telling detail is the inside shutters, sienna-colored silk screens set in wooden frames, which filter the glaring Roman sunlight and suffuse the rooms with a soft golden light.

In the drawing room, the focal point is a painting by the Danish artist Bei of a group of artists at work in the Royal Academy of Copenhagen. Karl used it as his source of reference for his theme of the artist's atelier, hence the plaster busts—copies of the antique—that sit atop the twin mahogany bibliothèques in the drawing room and the eighteenth-century version of the Medici Venus. Also intended as a reference to the period are the paintings that hang, casually unframed, on the walls of the room Karl calls the *salon atelier.* In his



The master bathroom with a spiral staircase and neoclassical details.

pursuit of the Academy mood, Karl took a further step: he gave up a large portion of the second floor to the space necessary for the voluminous cupola that dominates the *salon atelier.*

In the mansard-roofed master bedroom, both the neoclassical age and Northern Europe are evoked through the paintings of Angelica Kauffmann and Johann Heinrich Wilhelm Tischbein, the German artist best known for his portrait of Goethe in the Campagna while ancient Rome appears in the gouaches of Isidoro González Velázquez, a Spanish artist of the period. Casual elegance is here supplemented by a refined sense of drama. Karl understates it as "the poet's attic."

Both the strikingly fine verdigris wood paneling and the impressive Louis XVI bed are late-eighteenth-century Piedmontese pieces. For a bedside table, Karl uses one of the chairs in the peculiar Louis XVI Italian style which retain their original caning intact. An Aubusson restoration tapestry adds a touch of opulence.

Before he starts a house the meticulous Karl develops his ideas in scrapbooks filled with visual references, pictures, drawings, and short notes, which reflect or attempt to capture the desired atmosphere. He calls these his "books of concepts."

Lagerfeld took one of these books to Massimo Zompa, a Roman antiques dealer, "a man of great sensitivity," who helped Lagerfeld find some pieces. Except for the richly extravagant guest room, the ensemble of the furniture is Piedmontese. In the last

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Karl believes in friendly and elegant ghosts. The one he conjured up here was that of an affluent *amateur* of the neoclassical age, a man with a decidedly Nordic sensibility who would have read Goethe

decade of the eighteenth century, Piedmontese artists and craftsmen trained in France elaborated an elegant—and bolder—variation of the Louis XVI style.

Karl describes the guest room as "a room from an 1850 Italian opera. I prefer Donizetti to the later composers and even if I dislike nineteenth-century styles, I thought that I could try my hand at it. After all, this room is made for my guests who rarely happen to be Nordic and appreciate the nineteenth century."

What he has achieved is deftly controlled theatricalities. A huge painting by Winterhalter, the portrait of the Prince of Castel Visca who was also a composer under the assumed name of Vincenzo Spada, dominates the room. A most perfect example of 1840 extreme chic itself, the musical prince, sublimely attired in black and beige, sits at the piano, a Vincenzo Spada score in full view, in an equally exalted room. Karl thought nothing of reproducing the atmospheric quality of the Prince's surroundings. Thus, the guest room mirrors the painting, in an all-encompassing *Through the Looking-Glass* effect. "The room is contained in the painting," says Karl matter-of-factly. "The walls and the carpet are exactly the same."

The walls are covered in princely fashion, in red damask stamped in ochre, the bed golden-yellow satin lined with gold, yellow, and red damask. The Piedmontese chairs are covered in yellow satin. On the walls, oil on canvas designs of settings for *Lucia di Lammermoor* and other operas by Donizetti reassert the original inspiration for the room.

When I first met Karl more than fifteen years ago, he had just switched from a mixture of Pop Art and Louis XV, a pure late-sixties statement—one can easily picture the Wesselmanns and Jasper Johns looming over the bergères—to Art Deco. I remember vividly the commanding—almost menacing—apartment on rue de l'Université with its dark massive volume and lacquered surfaces. But Karl's flamboyant love affair with Art Deco was to end quite abruptly. He scattered his rich, exhaustive collection in much-talked-about auctions (today, he describes Art Deco style as grim) and moved into a new, contrasting phase of unemotional simplicity. Around 1974, the uncluttered apartment on Place St. Sulpice looked like a very expensive, updated clinic. The glass and chrome tables, the dentist's chairs, the exercise machines, and the overall bare surrounding space were the signs and symptoms of high-tech taste before its time. But soon after Karl was to plunge with unrestrained delight into the Age of Enlightenment. He remains to this day devoted to the era that he envisions as the most authentically modern.

For him, eighteenth-century luxury seems a natural background. To make his point, he tells an anecdote:

> "One day Matisse asked Maillol why did all his statues have such thick ankles. And Maillol answered: 'What do you want, that's the way Mme. Maillol is made!' It's the same with furniture, one has these things because one doesn't have any other."

Of course. □

Editor: Marie-Paule Pellé

CORRECTION

House & Garden regrets that in Perfection in Miniature, pages 130–135 of the July issue, the name of the designer, Jack Ceglic, was misspelled.

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TRANSFORMED FOR ART

(Continued from page 207) western orientation and a neat separation of private and public spaces (one door closes off the entire private family section), but it required new walls for the paintings and the inevitable opening up of spaces to improve flow. After working through two rough sketches with a designer, the Sanderses realized they needed an architect and called in Shelton, Mindel & Associates.

Lee Mindel reminds us that "in traditional Park Avenue apartments, the service areas were removed from the public realm, but today, especially in households with young children, the kitchen becomes part of public life. We set the domino theory in motion. Once the existing maids' rooms were torn out to make way for a large family kitchen, the other dominos fell." After gutting the interior of the public space, Lee and his partner, Peter Shelton, introduced two sets of walls, U- and T-shaped in plan, that provide uninterrupted wall space for the art collection, open up the central core of the apartment to light and views, and immeasurably ease movement through the spaces. Slipped into the shell formed by the original peripheral walls, which took on a warm white paint and new moldings, these simple, light gray planes compose a modern gallery within a traditional apartment.

Shelton and Mindel further intertwined the old and the new by developing a bay system to order the peripheral walls and by shuffling doors and closets in the bedrooms to achieve a more private and peaceful plan. They slipped elegant bathrooms of granite and marble behind finely tuned cabinetry of ash and mahogany and fashioned a front hall that recalls the grand entry foyers on Park Avenue but welcomes you decidedly to the eighties and nontraditional art.

The Sanderses wanted "a home that would carry us through two children." One has already arrived to test the plan and prove that, yes, it works. So Shelton and Mindel may have to wait quite some time before they design another residence for Pamela and Arthur. Meanwhile, they will be designing an office building on Long Island that Arthur is developing, and renovating a large apartment, this time on Fifth Avenue, for Pamela's parents—which all adds up to high praise indeed. □

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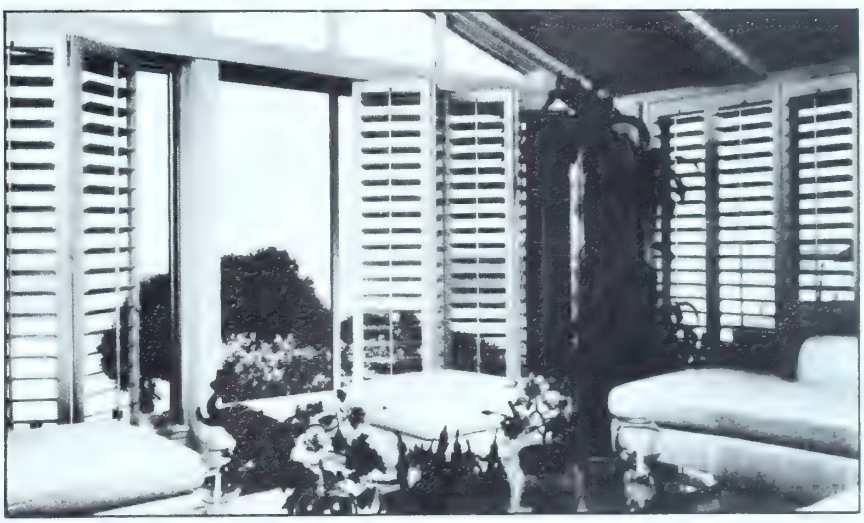
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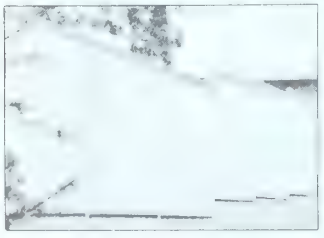
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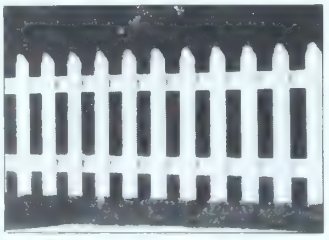
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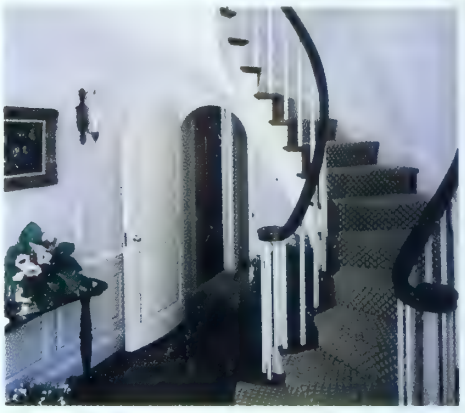
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Door leading from hallway to kitchen and guest rooms subtly follows the curve of the stairwell.

(Continued from page 196) dows and doors of the main house can be flung open so that the inside and the outside become one (Gillette positioned it to take advantage of the cooling breezes from the Sound). In the main house there is the little paneled sitting room awash with pictures of horses by Sartorius and dogs by Barenger, which Pauline has collected or inherited. Next to that there is a tiny dining room, which seats eight, as well as twelve guest rooms. The Boardmans' bedroom and dressing rooms are on the second floor. Across the courtyard there is the large living room, which can also seat 18 to 24 for dinner, and the bedrooms for her two daughters. Pauline maintains that "it is not a particularly practical situation, but I have tried to make it as practical as possible." And so she has, for I cannot think of a more practical solution than to lodge teenagers in another house from the one in which I am trying to sleep, and have separate quarters in which to entertain that can be abandoned when the party is over until the next day.

When her grandmother built the house in which they live, as opposed to the house in which they entertain, she did so for Pauline's father and his friends, who in an F. Scott Fitzgerald manner would come down to Long Island from college or back from "the continent" to sail, play golf or polo, or just to take in a debutante party or two. As the great main house was some distance away from the twin houses, Granny, too, probably gave a little thought to putting air between her children, their entertaining, and herself, so the present arrangement has some historical precedent.

Later, when Pauline's father went off and married, the house was used for receiving guests, and for ten years the Duke and Duchess of Windsor would come there for the summer.

"You know, I didn't really have to do anything architecturally to the house when we moved in," says Pauline. "The bones were just too good, and the architecture charming. We had lived so long in England and this place lent itself to an English look to such a degree that it was natural to do it all in the English manner. The labor of love was the garden. There was a six-foot-high wall between the house and the Sound, which completely blocked off the view, so we took it down to three feet, put in a pool, and restored the landscaping." On weekends in the summer Pauline will have a table for six or eight set under the great oaks where they can lunch and watch the multitude of sailboats that dot the Sound on any given Sunday. "You know," she says, "on a clear day you can see Connecticut." On any kind of day you can see she has created something very special. □

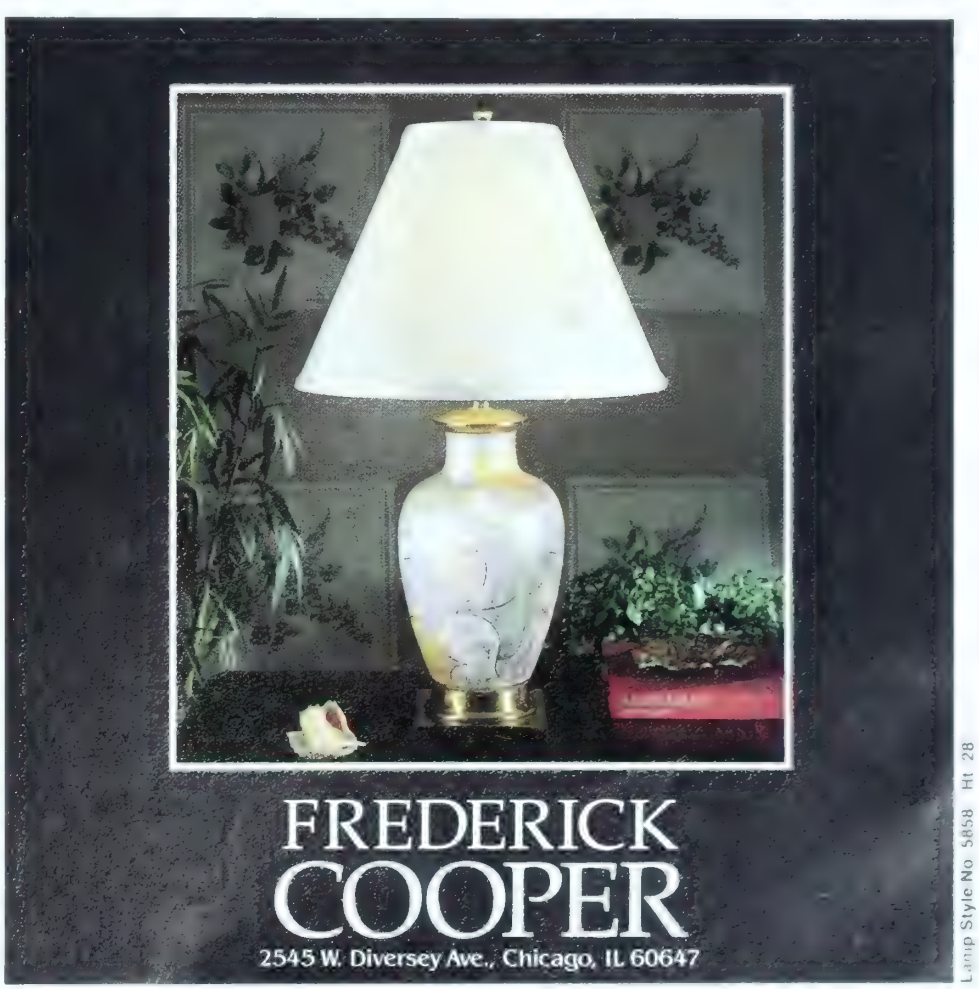
Editor: Carolyn Sollis

(Continued from page 192) in the United States until the middle of the nineteenth century was largely a matter of apprenticeship. But beginning with Richard Morris Hunt in 1846, increasing numbers of Americans attended the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, the venerable architecture school that commanded unparalleled prestige if not a firm grasp on the tumultuous changes that confronted the profession in the Age of Industrialism. Sullivan, eager to avail himself of the best education he could find (though typically he became impatient once he got there), was admitted to the Beaux-Arts in the fall of 1874. In later life he fudged the specifics of his stay, suggesting he had been there far longer than his few months of enrollment. But again, as did his quick experience of Frank Furness, it made an indelible impression. Most important of the ideas he picked up in Paris was the Beaux-Arts *esquisse* ("sketch") method of architectural design, in which, after careful consideration of an assignment, one made a rapid drawing that became the irrevocable basis for the detailed planning. That is precisely the technique Sullivan described in devising his scheme for the Wainwright Building of 1890-91 in St. Louis, "a very sudden and volcanic design (made literally in three minutes)."

After returning to Chicago from Paris in 1875, Sullivan began working as a free-lance architectural designer, one of an army of similar independents who readily found employment in the aftermath of the catastrophic fire that had destroyed the inland metropolis only four years earlier. By the end of the seventies he had found his way to the office of Dankmar Adler, the German-born structural engineer whose partner he would become in 1883, inaugurating the most fruitful decade of their careers.

Adler and Sullivan were a perfect team. Adler had a genius for problem-solving and a masterful command of several technical specialties (most notably acoustics, for which he served as a consultant on New York's aurally glorious Carnegie Hall). But he also possessed the diplomatic skills that the contentious, temperamental Sullivan was so painfully wanting and which would lead him into deeper distress as his fortunes waned. Sullivan, however, was indisputably the artist, and his self-







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conscious exploitation of that role set him above and apart from his co-professionals. Together, Adler and Sullivan were a formidable pairing, and they rose rapidly in the experimentally inclined atmosphere of Chicago in the prosperous and expansionist 1880s.

Though most of their early works were of a commercial nature, Adler and Sullivan soon gained a reputation for theater design, which got them the most important commission of their dozen years as partners. The huge popularity of an opera festival in Chicago led civic-minded investors to propose a magnificent new music theater on a scale to equal the recently completed Metropolitan Opera House in New York. The Auditorium Building, as the new venture was called, would rise on an entire block facing Michigan Avenue, the park, and the lake on one side, Congress Parkway and Wabash Avenue on two others. Its centerpiece would be a 4,200-seat concert hall, around which were deployed a 500-seat recital hall, 136 offices and stores, and a 400-room hotel, all within a single monolithic structure. Designed and erected between 1886 and 1890, it was upon its completion the most massive building in the world, a $3-million behemoth of boosterism and a showpiece of American engineering ingenuity and decorative audacity.

It was important, too, as the project in which the Sullivan style was brought into sharp focus, as shown in the three successive schemes for the Auditorium Building illustrated in Robert Twombly's new biography, *Louis Sullivan: His Life and Work* (Viking, $29.95). Each version became clearer, simpler, and stronger, in direct response to H. H. Richardson's Marshall Field Wholesale Store, then nearing completion a few blocks west of the Auditorium site. That structure's powerful internal rhythms, set forth by a varied but coherent system of windows within rusticated granite cladding, were contained by its straightforward rectilinear outline, a far cry from the finicky, pinnacled profiles of most large-scale buildings of the period. To Sullivan the Marshall Field Wholesale Store was an "oasis" in the architectural desert of Chicago, and his revision of the Auditorium Building is a direct homage to the bold Richardsonian style.

The unqualified triumph of the Auditorium, immediately hailed an architectural prodigy of the first order, advanced Adler and Sullivan to the forefront of the profession. The partners settled into their impressive new duplex offices on the top floors of that building's seventeen-story tower, and their prospects for the future seemed as bright and unobstructed as the panoramic view from their windows. The firm's clientele up to this point had been mainly from Chicago, but now their practice began to expand geographically. They built a new opera house in Pueblo, Colorado, remodeled one in Milwaukee, and in 1890 were asked to design the Wainwright Building, the office tower in St. Louis now generally considered to be their watershed work.



Adler and Sullivan's Wainwright Building of 1890–91 in St. Louis, first essay in a new vocabulary of high-rise design.

Sullivan was convinced that "every problem . . . contains and suggests its own solution." For the Wainwright Building the solution occurred to him abruptly while he was out for a walk on Michigan Avenue; the architect dashed back to his drawing board, and in the words of his 23-year-old assistant, Frank Lloyd Wright, "As he threw the 'stretch' with the first three bays outlined in pencil on it, I sensed what had happened. In his vision, here beyond doubt, was the dawn of a new day in skyscraper architecture."

To be sure, there had been superlative high-rise buildings in the years just before the Wainwright, but it pointed the way, as none had before, toward an entirely new architectural vocabulary, a breakthrough that Sullivan called "the beginning of a logical and poetic expression of metallic frame construction." Sullivan gave the most complete exposition of his philosophy of sky-

scraper design in his influential 1896 essay, "The Tall Office Building Artistically Considered," declaring that the new urban tower must be "a proud and soaring thing." The Wainwright Building is somewhat less than that: proud, but not quite soaring. At nine stories plus attic, it dwarfed everything else around it, but its weighty proportions and the "warp and woof" of its virtually square, tapestrylike façades do not convey the sensation of upward thrust of Sullivan's later, more ethereal essays in skyscraper design.

What did make it special was the lucid way in which Sullivan signified the character of the steel-frame structure. The operative term here is "signified," not "revealed," for as Modernist critics have felt compelled to note, the handling of the Wainwright's elevations can be viewed as less than "honest" if one considers that only every other one of the piers that rise from the third through ninth stories has active structural members behind it; the others are present purely for compositional effect. Actually, a careful reading of the building's base shows that there Sullivan expressed the load-bearing piers alone. But Sullivan, like Ludwig Mies van der Rohe 75 years later, never felt constrained to make decisions solely in the name of "honesty," whatever that might be in the building art. Both men were absolutely secure in the intent and quality of their efforts, and each pursued his course with no doubt as to the correctness of his choices.

Adler and Sullivan's seventeen-story Schiller Building of 1891-92 in Chicago was far more "a proud and soaring thing," and the British architectural historian Sir Banister Fletcher praised it as "the best designed tall structure . . . in the United States, [bearing] the same relation to the new style of tall buildings as the Parthenon bears to the architecture of Greece." The Classical allusion turned out to be especially ironic, for while Sullivan labored to create a thoroughly indigenous style of American architecture and ornament, the institutional fashion for Beaux-Arts Classicism inexorably began to overtake his efforts.

The climax of this major shift in architectural taste came with the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago. In his memoirs Sullivan gloomily predicted that "the damage wrought by the World's Fair will last for half a century from its date, if not longer," and he marked it as the onset of his own steep decline. In fact, there had been a considerable constituency for the new "American Renaissance" style long before the fair, while other innovative architects, including Frank Lloyd Wright and other members of the Prairie School, who revered Sullivan as their spiritual father, were able to flourish thereafter.

What happened to Louis Sullivan? The year 1893 was significant not only for the "White City" in Chicago but also for the financial panic that led to the worst depression in American history up to that point, affecting Adler and Sullivan's practice tremendously. Their last collaboration, the twelve-story (plus attic) Guaranty Building of 1894–95 in Buffalo, was an unqualified critical success, and it fully overcame the earthbound quality of the Wainwright Building, which it in many other respects resembled. In the year of its completion Adler decided to leave the foundering firm; Sullivan unwisely dropped Adler's name from the credits for the Guaranty Building soon after his departure, and their separation widened into an unbreachable rift. Adler's death in 1900 dashed any hopes for a reconciliation.

Sullivan made a brave go of it alone, and for several years it appeared as though he would succeed. Though his first independent job, a new department store for Schlesinger & Mayer in Chicago in 1896, never got past the project stage, he built a small outlet for them on State Street three years later and in 1902 was asked back to expand it into the magnificent facility that still stands at the corner of State and Madison. The first-generation historians of Modernism reveled in the purity of the upper stories of the structure (which was bought by Carson Pirie Scott in 1903) but felt far less comfortable about the luxuriant tangle of cast-iron ornament encasing its base. They loved the building only from the knees up, as it were, but the stunning contrast be-



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tween the densely decorated lower stories and the severely unadorned grid above gives it a dynamic polarity very much to current tastes.

Without his more level-headed ally, however, Sullivan became ever more adept at alienating current patrons and discouraging potential ones, as well as antagonizing the architectural establishment with reckless abandon as his work load gradually slipped. His marriage at the age of 42 to a woman 22 years his junior ended, childless, after ten years, and the first decade of the new century saw things move from bad to worse. Sullivan's drinking increased as his commissions dwindled, though it is hard to say whether it was cause or effect or both.

After another national depression in 1907, a series of financial disasters ensued. He was compelled to sell his beloved vacation house in Ocean Springs, Mississippi, and in order to make a settlement on his estranged wife he had to auction virtually all his personal possessions, which fetched a paltry $1,100; he was left with $100 to his name. In 1918 came the crowning blow, when he was forced out of his Auditorium Building office. To Frank Lloyd Wright he wrote with little overstatement, "I am surely living in hell."

Sullivan's salvation, if it can be called that, came from two sources: his writing and the series of bank commissions that became almost his entire architectural output for the last two decades of his life. As do many architects with unwanted time on their hands, Sullivan decided to put his philosophy on paper. His widely read *Kindergarten Chats*, a kind of Socratic dialogue with a younger colleague (believed to be Wright) was published in 52 installments in 1901–02 and won him an appreciative new audience. His quirky, selective, deceptive (and therefore revealing) *Autobiography of an Idea* appeared only days before his death in 1924, as did *A System of Architectural Ornament According with a Philosophy of Man's Powers,* a portfolio of twenty virtuoso plates in which he summed up his theories of applied decoration. Sullivan's prose often seems overblown, but even his most extravagant renderings somehow do not. As Frank Lloyd Wright put it, "He may have been ridiculous when he wrote . . . [but] he was miraculous when he drew."

Between 1906 and 1920 Sullivan completed eight small banks in the Midwest, which some critics have seen as a sad comedown. But others now prize them as autumnal masterpieces, imbued with an elegiac delicacy that even the harshest adversity could not drain from their designer. Sullivan had urged his fellow builders to "arrange your architecture for Democracy, not for Imperialism," and in these little symbols of the Progressive Movement that flourished in the Midwest during those years he did just that.

As different from and similar to one another as snowflakes, the banks played off the most intricate carvings, castings, moldings, inlays, mosaics, and stained glass against strong, plain masses of brick. The only contemporary parallel was the work of the Viennese Secessionists, but Sullivan's designs differed from theirs (and those of the other schools of Art Nouveau) in that he sought local paradigms for his decorative fantasies. Instead of the languid lotuses and flaccid orchidaceous tendrils of his European counterparts, Sullivan preferred the sturdy, humble flora of the prairies: bursting corn husks, seed pods, berries, weeds, and grasses, which he combined into arrangements of astonishing vigor, emblematic of his pride in his homeland and his Jeffersonian conviction that society's strength stems ultimately from the soil. "Nature is the source of power," he wrote, "and the city, the arena in which that power is dissipated." As the advocate of the skyscraper, the most extreme form of urbanism, Sullivan seems an unlikely author of such sentiments, yet it is but one further antithesis in a life filled with oppositions.

As machines for economic development, some of Sullivan's works in big cities—such as the Schiller Building and the Chicago Stock Exchange—have fallen to the wrecker's ball. Outmoded, they ended up treated as commercial properties rather than cultural legacies. But most of his small-town banks survive, still treasured as the finest buildings for miles around and pilgrimage points even though off the beaten architectural path. Sullivan, who built with utter conviction whether simply or grandly, was in tune with some essential quality of the American spirit, and it lives on, as he predicted it would, far from the urban crowd. □

"Louis Sullivan: The Function of Ornament," a major exhibition at the Chicago Historical Society from Sept. 4, 1986, to Jan. 1, 1987, is accompanied by a visually superb catalogue (W. W. Norton, $35). The show travels to the Cooper-Hewitt Museum in New York (Mar. 23, 1987–May 1987), The Saint Louis Art Museum (Aug. 28, 1987–Oct. 25, 1987), and the Renwick Gallery, Washington, D.C. (Dec. 1987–Spring 1988).

THE FLOWER PORTRAITS OF MRS. DELANY

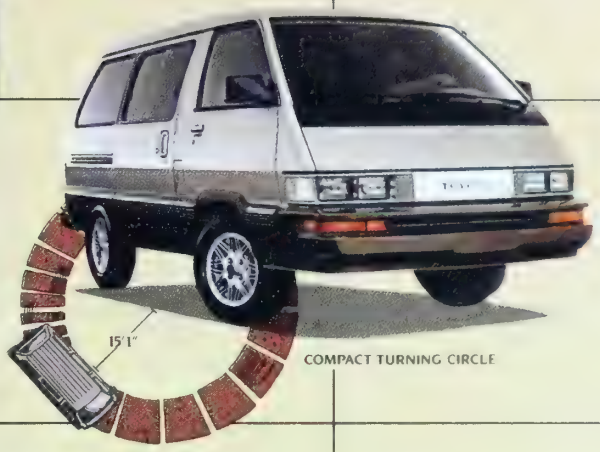
(Continued from page 201) large flower in each curve of the border. The richly embroidered hemline of the petticoat, encrusted with large flowers and leaves, has more flowers scattered above as if nonchalantly thrown, yet placed by her own skillful hand in such a way as to be in perfect balance one to another. The plants include jasmine, hawthorn berries, sweet pea, love-in-the-mist, forget-me-nots, and many others.

Though always interested in fashion Mrs. Delany did not herself wear the exaggerated styles worn by so many of those in society that she knew. It was her nature to steer the course of moderation, though recording in her letters with enthusiasm any exquisite embroidered dresses she saw at the many court functions she attended. "Lady Mary Tufton white embroidered with garlands, and flower pots of flowers mixt with much silver . . . the Dss of Queensbury's white satin, embroidered . . . nasturtiums, ivy, honeysuckle, periwinkles, convolvuluses which

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spread and covered the petticoat" was her description of a ball in February 1741.

At 42 she married again, to Dr. Patrick Delany, an Irish Protestant clergyman of Dublin, and Dean of Down. This was a happy marriage of 25 years in which he encouraged her in all her artistic gifts, including the application of shells as decoration to ceilings, walls, candelabra, and grottoes. By Dr. Delany's death in 1768, Mary Delany had obtained skills to show her ingenuity of mind, her precision with scissors, and a considerable knowledge of plants.

In the autumn of 1772 Mrs. Delany wrote to her niece, Mary Port: "I have invented a new way of imitating flowers, I'll send you next time I write one for a sample."

Many years later, Mrs. Delany recalled how she had begun her new recreation. She was staying at Bulstrode, near Gerrards Cross about thirty miles from London, the country house of her lifelong friend the Dowager Duchess of Portland, when she noticed the similarity of color between a geranium and a piece of red paper that was on the table of her sitting room. Taking her scissors, she cut out the scarlet paper and, using more colored paper for the leaves and stalk, she created a picture of the geranium. The Duchess, on entering the room, mistook the paper petals for real ones. Modest as she was, Mrs. Delany considered her paper flowers to be a mere "whim of my own fancy" that "might fondly beguile my judgement to think better of it than it deserved," but the Duchess's enthusiasm encouraged her to persevere with her new art: "Her approbation was such sanction to my undertaking, as made it appear of consequence and gave me courage to go on with confidence."

With the plant specimen set before her she cut minute particles of colored paper to represent the petals, stamens, calyx, leaves, veins, stalk, and other parts of the plant, and using lighter and darker paper to form the shading, she stuck them on to a matt black background. By placing one piece upon another she sometimes built up several layers to complete a flower head with



'Hibiscus Rosa Sinensis, China Rose'

perhaps two and three hundred snippets of paper to form the petals. Over and again we see Mrs. Delany's interest in botany, for she might include a bunch of berries beside the main plant which she had depicted in blossom; or sometimes, the roots and bulbs.

Most of the colored papers she used came from China but were supplemented by paper-stainers (wallpaper manufacturers): if their colors had run they were happy to sell that spoiled paper to her. Sometimes she dyed the paper herself to get the exact botanical shade.

There is added interest in the notes Mrs. Delany wrote on the back of the pictures, for she generally wrote the place where she was when she made the picture, mostly either at her house in St. James Place, London, or Bulstrode, where the summer months were generally spent staying with the Duchess of Portland. She recorded the date when she finished the work, which has proved to be of great interest to plant historians, because the eighteenth century was a time when hundreds of new plants were coming into England for the first time, brought by explorers for medical and economic reasons. She wrote, too, the name of the person who gave her the plant: on the back of an amaryllis is written "Sent me by the Queen," a fourth inscription tells where the plant was growing. Many of the plants came from the King's own botanical garden, as he gave orders to Sir Joseph Banks that new plants growing in the royal gardens at Kew should be sent to her to copy.

Each part of the plant was faithfully copied, life-size and with amazing accuracy, the stamens and styles of the flowers cut with threadlike precision and in accurate numbers. It was to this attention to detail that Sir Joseph Banks referred when he said they were the only representations of nature that he had ever seen from which he could venture to describe botanically any plant without the least fear of committing an error.

An indication of the speed with which Mrs. Delany completed each floral picture in her Flora Delanica, as she jokingly called her collection, appears in a letter to her niece in April 1776. "The Spring flowers now supply me with work, for I have already done since the beginning of March 20 plants." There was the excitement of copying plants that had just arrived in England for the first time, and which she had not seen before. Mrs. Delany wrote to Mary Port from Bulstrode: "I am so plentifully supplied with the hothouse here, and from the Queen's own garden at Kew, that natural plants have been a good deal laid aside this year for foreigners, but not less in favour." Many were plants imported from America: 'Magnolia Grandiflora', 'Cassia Marylandica', 'Andromeda From North America', 'Impatiens Noli tangere Touch Me Not, Americana', and 'Catesbaea Spinosa Lily Thorn'.

Mrs. Delany was in her element when looking for plants herself either in the large parks of her friends' country estates, or in visits to a specialist garden like the Chelsea Physic Garden on the banks of the Thames, where Philip Miller, whom she had known, had done so much to build up a splendid botanical garden. It was from there that Miller sent out cotton seeds to the new colony of Georgia which became the staple crop, and in return seeds from new species were received in England.

To add to the delight of studying these pictures, occasionally a real leaf has been incorporated, sometimes a small spray of leaves, and personal



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notes on the back tell us of events in her life. "Bulstrode August 12, 1778, the day the King and Queen and the Royal Family were at Bulstrode" is written on the verso of the magnificent *Cactus Grandiflorus,* Melon Thistle; and another records, "Went in ye evening to the Queen's Lodge," such little indications revealing the fondness that George III and the Queen had for her.

In October 1782, when Mrs. Delany, well into her eighties, found through failing eyesight that she could no longer continue this recreation, it was a sad blow, as she had hopes of completing her thousandth picture, falling short of this target by only fifteen. She placed them in ten volumes and wrote an index for each one of them with botanical and English names in her own clear hand. They are a handsome tribute to one of England's talented and ingenious eighteenth-century ladies. □

THE DOMESTIC PICASSO

(Continued from page 137) painted it. And the vision of these galumphing women ensured the success of this flimsy ballet—named after the express train from Paris to the Riviera—which cashed in on the new mania for sport. *Le Train bleu* also made a star of a young Irish dancer, Patrick Healey-Kay, whom Diaghilev had renamed Anton Dolin. In honor of this new ephebe, Diaghilev organized a very grand rehearsal: Princesse Charlotte and Prince Pierre of Monaco, the American Princesse Edmond de Polignac, and the Picassos with little Paulo were enthroned in a row of armchairs. When Dolin appeared—a young god in a striped bathing suit—"Diaghilev adjusted his monocle, and watched him closely, beating time with his foot," while "Nijinska lit another cigarette."

Back, however, to Dinard, where Picasso first envisioned these women hurtling along the beach. The blandness of the Breton resort and the unwonted role of *père de famille* is reflected in a certain blandness and politeness of style: witness the aforementioned *Maternités,* which are some of the most conventional works of this conventional period. Olga has been idealized into a Greco-Roman matron/madonna, Paulo into a chubby putto. We hardly need to be told that Picasso had developed a perverse taste for late Renoir and had acquired, through exchanges with dealers, some figure paintings by the master—mountains of apricot-tinted cellulite—one of which had been painted a mere six years earlier.

The most important of Picasso's Renoirs, *La Coiffure* is especially revealing because so many of the drawings in the Dinard sketchbooks portray the same stilted subject: a maid dressing the hair of a goddess of nothing in particular. To give the image maternal overtones, Picasso has added a cherubic child as well as a mirror on which the three heads can focus—a reference, I suspect, to Olga's narcissism. As in most of Picasso's neoclassical work, the faces have been idealized to the point of anonymity. But even when the artist is out to do a recognizable portrait of Olga, he keeps his distance and, far from humanizing her, turns her back into a piece of classical sculpture. Just the reverse of the treatment he meted out to subsequent wives and mistresses, whose features and, on occasion, more intimate parts are subjected to scrutiny one can only describe as surgical: to judge by "portraits" which run from the sublime to the anatomical, from the tender to the obscene.



The façade of Villa Beauregard in Dinard

Toward the end of September, Olga fell ill—complications caused by Paulo's birth, which had not been easy. Picasso "rushed her to Paris, nursing her with ice packs . . . while little Paulo was violently car-sick." An operation was performed from which Olga rapidly recovered. The artist then returned to Dinard in his new Hispano-Suiza, driven by a liveried chauffeur, and brought back all the work he had done in the course of this prolific summer.

Next time Picasso went to Dinard—six years later, and to the very same rented house—classical propriety was a thing of the past. He had taken violently against the wretched Olga and portrayed the ideal beauty of former years as a praying mantis—and worse. "*La chèvre larmoyante*" is what he called her: the lachrymose nanny goat. This time the bourgeois respectability of Dinard played into the artist's manipulative hands. It was the perfect place to placate the hated Olga; better still, the perfect place to stash his voluptuous teenage mistress, Marie-Thérèse Walter. For Dinard abounded in *colonies de vacances* (summer camps), in one of which Marie-Thérèse was installed for the season. As for the beach cabanas, a recurrent feature of works of the period, what a convenient setting for pneumatic bliss. □

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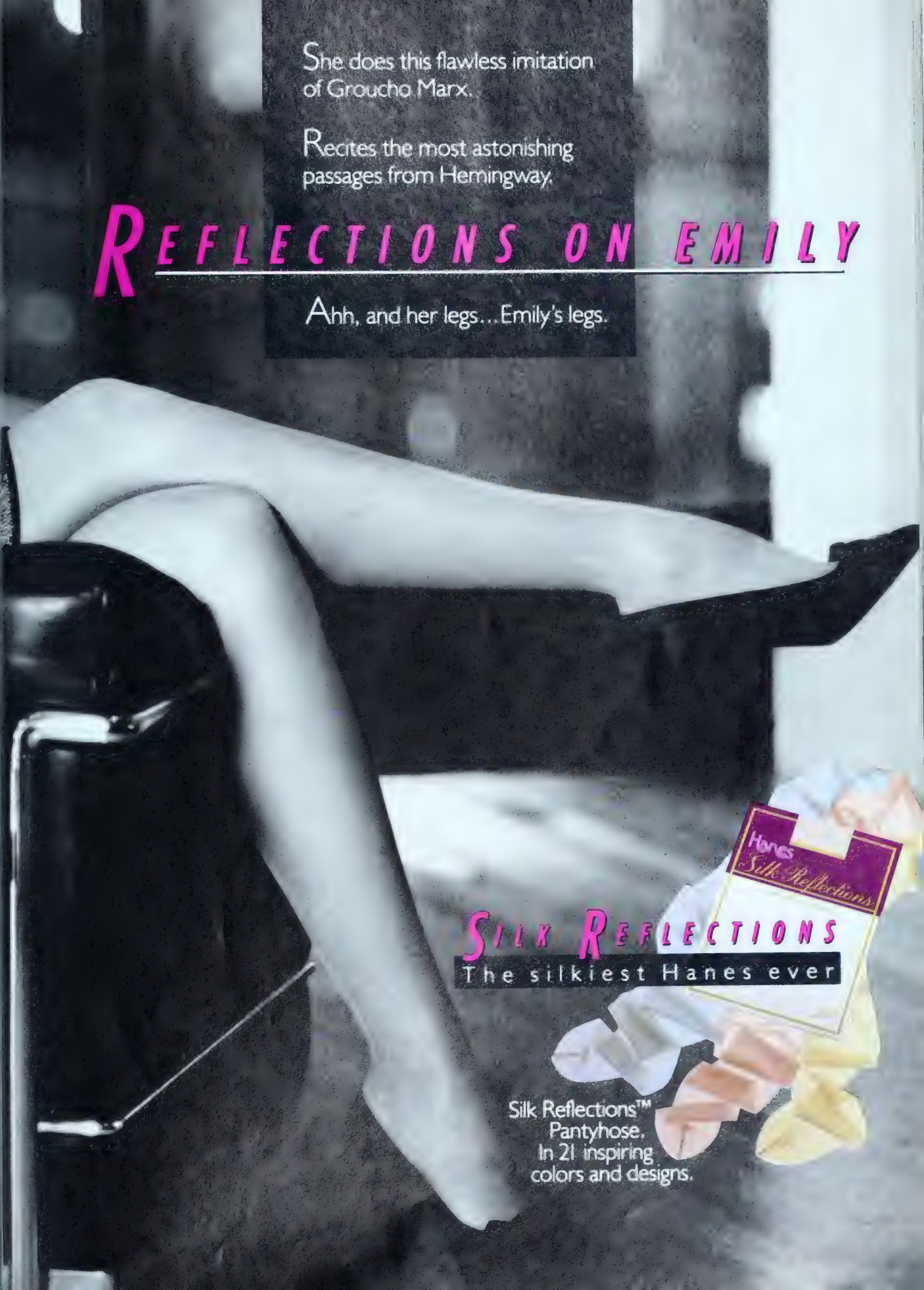
COVER
The ivory-and-red living room of the new apartment of Sister Parish, which once belonged to Gloria Swanson. Story page 150. Photograph by Oberto Gili.

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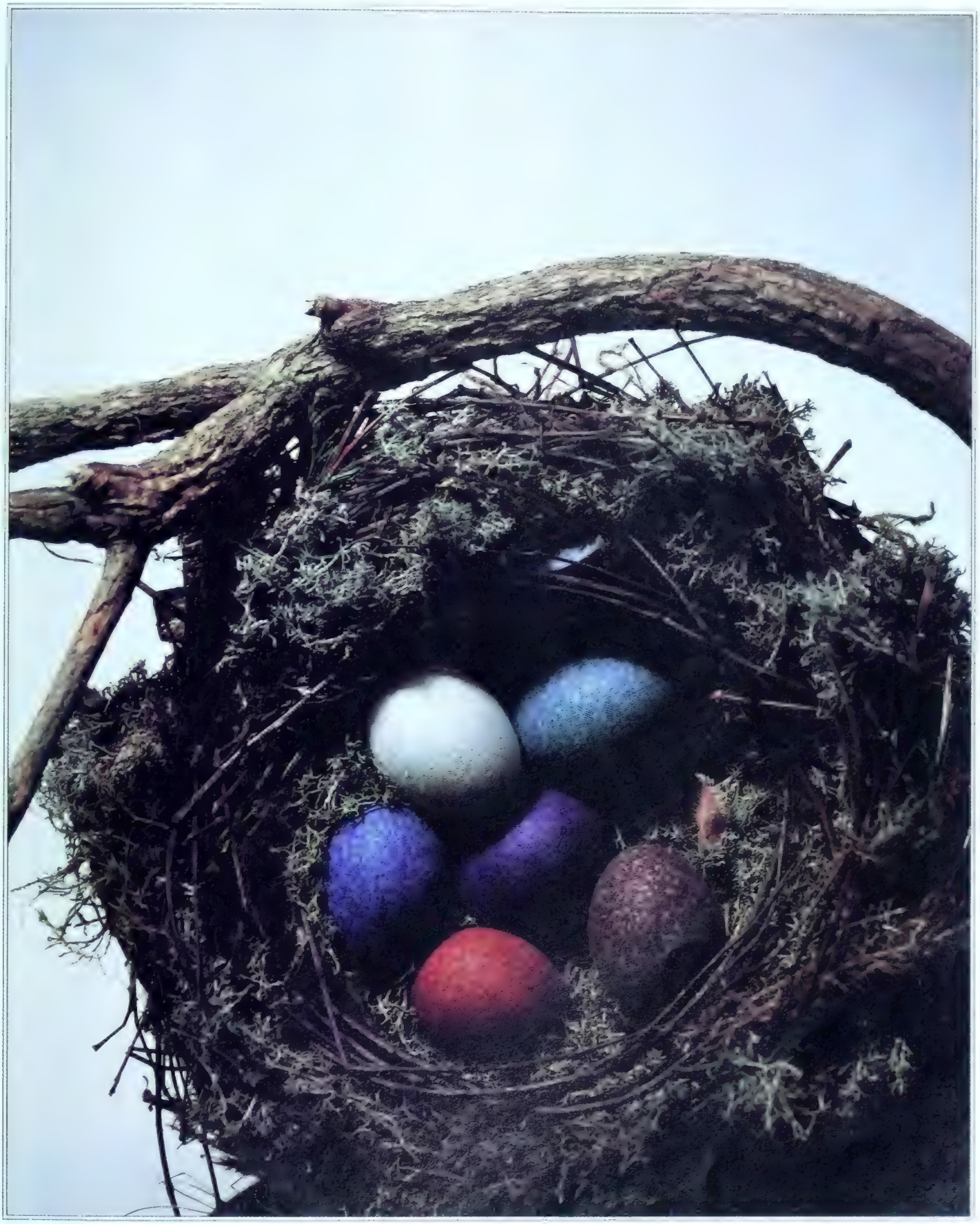
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If this issue of House & Garden appears heavier than usual, that's because it is. Fall is always a good time to start something new, and we're doing that in spades this month with the introduction of three new editorial features.

The first is Choice, by name and intent, and it is one more way for us to report on what's new and what's noteworthy in decoration and design. Each month our editors around the world will be nominating their "choices" for this column. For three pages of our first selections of fabrics, furniture, and decorative objects, turn to page 102.

We call our second new feature Fine Work, a column devoted to artisans working in the best tradition of fine craftsmanship. Our first subject, Ruth Scheuer, is a weaver of tapestries. To learn more about her and her studio in SoHo, see page 76.



Against a background of 18th-century Chinese wallpaper from the Winterthur Museum are the eight curators and museum directors who participated in House & Garden's symposium on the American period room today: 1. Brock Jobe 2. Marilynn Johnson 3. Dianne H. Pilgrim 4. Christina H. Nelson 5. Charles F. Hummel 6. David B. Warren 7. Robert F. Trent 8. Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen

Art plays many important roles in the world covered by House & Garden. To help us all keep abreast of what's not to be missed in museums and galleries across the country, we decided to initiate our third new feature: On View. In its pages we will preview several important shows each month. To see, for example, how current attitudes toward Modernism are reflected in "Second Sight," the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art's fourth biennial exhibition, turn to page 252.

Lydia Winston Malbin, daughter of Albert Kahn, the great industrial architect who designed the early modern automobile factories of Detroit, grew up in a house full of important modern art (including one of Monet's *Waterlilies*). Later she struck off in a collecting direction her father disagreed with, but she has proven her instinct right by assembling the greatest private collection of Futurist art outside of Italy. For years her collection has been the cornerstone of Futurist retrospectives, but for a variety of reasons she reluctantly decided against lending to the major show now at the Palazzo Grassi, see page 200. To enrich our coverage of that landmark exhibition—and to correct the show's one major omission—House & Garden visits Mrs. Malbin's Manhattan apartment, page 206, which fairly bursts with the dynamic energy of her peerless collection of Futurist masterworks.

If you are like me, when you take a trip to any city, you usually try to visit one or two museums' decorative-arts exhibitions or take an amble through a town's historic house or settlement. Our country's growing interest in architectural preservation and decorative-arts scholarship has led to some interesting debate about the restoration of such period rooms, their extraction from the houses of which they were originally a part, and the showcasing of them in the nation's museums.

To get to the heart of that debate, we invited the people who decide what it is we will see on our visits to period rooms—museum curators and directors from all over the United States—to a round-table discussion with some of our editors. For House & Garden's symposium on The Period Room Reconsidered, see page 218.

And then for two wonderful stories of personal perseverance in historic preservation, read Yolande Oostens-Wittamer's account of her parents' restoration of the magnificent Hôtel Solvay in Brussels, page 232, and George Schoellkopf's account of how he and landscape painter Ron Johnson restored their eighteenth-century house in Connecticut, page 188. Both of these loving restorations, although very different, make us grateful that there are people who care.

Lou Gropp
Editor-in-Chief

PORTRAITS: RICHARD PANDISCIO

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ALL ABOUT STYLE

By Nancy Richardson

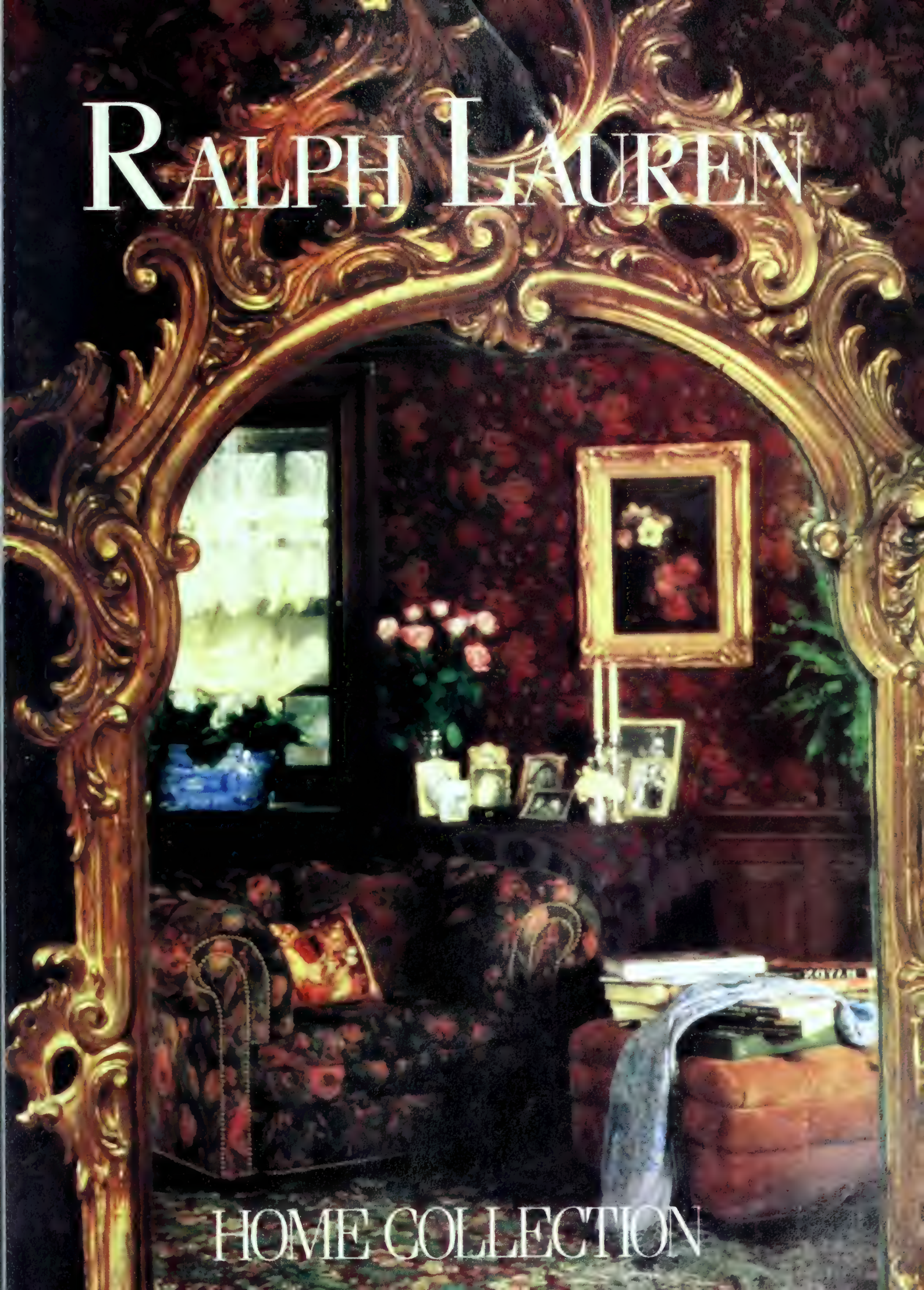
Good looking and out of context is the way most Americans like their antiques. Not everyone agrees



Mrs. Anne Cox Chambers's drawing room, *above,* is as fine an example of an American approach to decorating with antiques as Candida Lycett Green's country drawing room, *below,* is of the English. All drawings by Jean Hannon Douglas.



It comes as a surprise to most Americans that the English don't always approve of American decoration, especially as it applies to the use of antiques. What can pass for a howling success to an American is to an Englishman an interior that looks unpleasantly new and too obviously the work of a decorator. It's as if Americans get everything physical about a room letter-perfect while completely missing the point. The point, of course, being an intangible one. But it is something close to the character given to a domestic space by the daily habits of a widely read looker at art, architecture, and antiques as well as by the desirable muting effects of sunlight, dust (country, not city), time, and, perhaps, some dog hair. If by definition antiques wear the marks of time, shouldn't their setting also be stylishly shabby? But even in England this cult of patina has not always been the case. Edwardian England was very enthusiastic about housekeeping and eighteenth-century England certainly liked light, bright colors and brand-new furniture along with antiquities and pictures from prior periods. It is more recent that an influential English element seems to have a prejudice against treating interior architecture and decoration as something thinking people should be spending their time on. Of course, there is very little to improve on in the sort of historic architectural spaces that abound in England. An offhand arrangement of an eighteenth-century room is a knack the English lift to an art. But along with the knack comes attitudes that are hard to apply in nonhistoric American interiors. It's as if omissions in housekeeping were desirable and possibly an indication of intellect, the failures of connoisseurship in collecting if not as important surely as charming as the successes, and the pleasures of ownership most suitably expressed by dressing down valued possessions rather than dressing them up. A recent airing of the two views occurred at the time of the installation of the English-country-house exhibition at the National Gallery of Art in Washington. Some major pictures and 747-loads of treasures in the form of furniture, porcelain, silver, bronzes—some of the best goods of a nation's heritage—made their way to Washington as objects taken out of context. To achieve an allusion to various periods of country-house taste, the decoration of the galleries was carried out under the supervision of curator Gervase Jackson-Stops by the museum's chiefs of design, Gaillard F. Ravenel and Mark Leithauser, in a shorthand of period stylistic devices. There were mullioned windows of leaded glass, rush matting, and a beamed plasterwork ceiling in the Jacobean Long Gallery. Quartz crystals simulated a stone floor in the Tudor Renaissance space. In the neo-Palladian Burlington room there were handblocked wallpapers in Italian damask patterns copied by John Perry of Islington from old documents. The mid-eighteenth-century picture gallery titled The Dutch Cabinet had walls a greenish-blue bordered with a filigree of gilded cast plas-


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The English and the Americans have distinct habits when it comes to arranging objects. The English mantel, *above,* gains a charm from its offhandedness. An American treatment of Neo-Gothic elements, *below,* is concerned with proportion and balance.

The English insist that precious things look their best when dressed down. For them it's a failure when a house looks like a museum



tic and a mantel arranged with seven bronzes—Mercury in the center with three bronzes on each side. No made-up décor, the ideas for the color, border, mantel, and bronzes were copied from the Zoffany conversation piece of Sir Lawrence Dundas lent by the Marquess of Zetland. Everything in the exhibition seemed to have been restored or at least cleaned before coming over. Looking their best—and in a simplified museum setting that was definitely not a period room—many things appeared to be showing off. Or was it a question of seeing things clearly for the first time? Were we getting a comprehensive lesson in English taste or a striking visual experience? On the visual experience side of things it was certainly an American way of displaying antiques. One not so removed from our current attitudes toward decorating. And there wasn't an English scholar, author, decorator, owner of an important house, or critic who didn't want to explain in conversation or in print that though this exhibition was splendid, it was not at all like the English country house. Trotted out in a variety of guises, the argument of English sensibility goes: Americans tend to want to live with antiques too correctly and too self-consciously . . . it's a mistake to want important furniture, to put as much of it as you can afford into a few rooms and get a house that looks like a museum . . . too much major furniture just looks nouveau riche. Americans are certainly not immune to or ignorant of such arguments. Most American visitors to English country houses would like to buy the atmosphere along with the furniture if either were for sale. In fact, rather like the English who spent years making a grand tour in the eighteenth century, we *do* feel the need of tapping into a tradition more evolved in such matters than our own. But just as the English nobleman back from Rome created something at home that was still English rather than Italian, so Americans make something quite un-English of their English souvenirs. Besides, the current English look takes the form of a delight in breaking the rules and, as such, is hard to define as a positive system. As expressed in decoration, its successes are not always visual successes. The cultivation of a shabby atmosphere or the use of valuable things as doorstops or containers for dog leashes can produce some silly results. To most Americans the idea of inviting the dogs indoors to sit all over new slipcovers—instant patina—is ersatz. The dogs will get there soon enough. To let them chew on the claw feet of the pedestal of an old dining table of handsome demeanor may be offhand, but it is also unattractive. Many Americans collect rather than inherit antiques, and to the extent that these things are of European design, their use in a room is never what it would have been originally. The necessity is to create a setting compatible with furniture and objects of a prior period while still qualifying as modern. To this end Americans have become very comfortable arranging antiques according to purely visual criteria of scale, color, and shape. It is a habit rooted in a reaction to the stylistic excesses of the late Victorian period. Over eighty years ago the love of antiques rather than nineteenth-centu-

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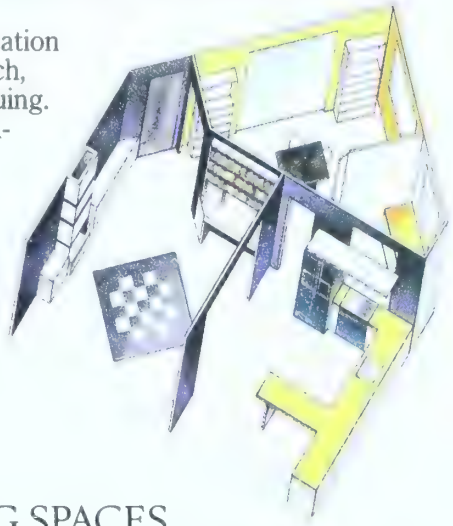
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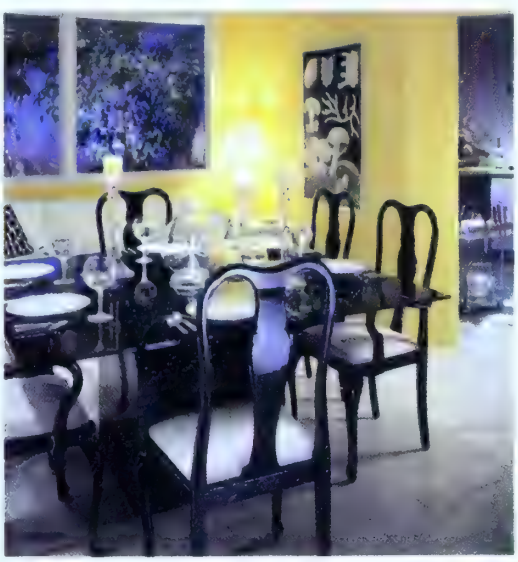
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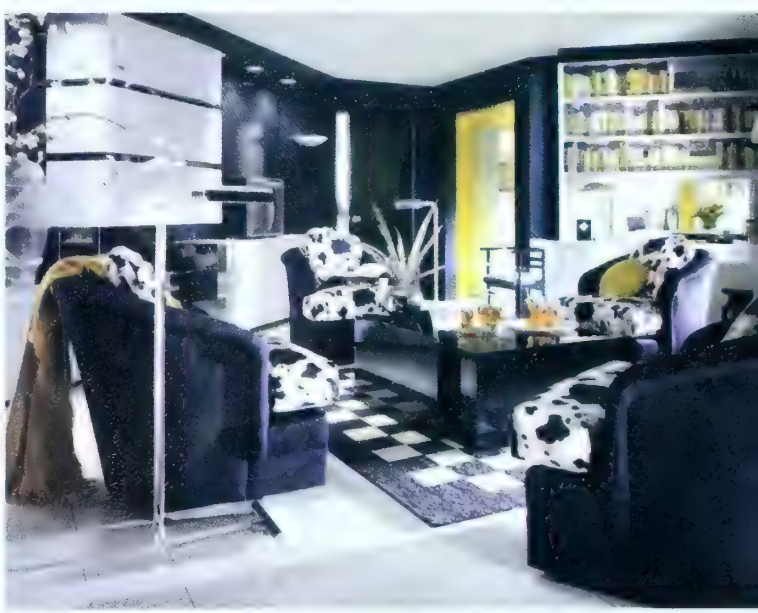




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ry factory-made furniture began to gain ground and with it an appreciation of a "modern" rather than a Victorian context to put them in. There were two sorts of American modernism that took hold in the first part of the century. The first school of thought as represented in *The Decoration of Houses* by Edith Wharton and Ogden Codman (Scribner 1902; Norton 1978) has influenced our attitude toward "traditional" decoration ever since. The second was the major movement in architecture in our time, establishing for an entire era the "clean" interior that has since been considered the best background for art, furniture, and objects of any period. It was the elegant vision of a young Philip Johnson, then the architectural historian at The Museum of Modern Art, and Henry-Russell Hitchcock, professor of fine arts at Harvard. Their book *The International Style* (Norton 1932; reprinted 1966) set forth the American interpretation of the German Bauhaus style of the 1920s and in the beginning, at least, had the effect of banishing antiques along with period interiors. The International Style never went anywhere in England, nor did it make particular inroads in the Yankee enclaves of the American Eastern seaboard. The English and the Yankees took for their inspiration the bare classical eighteenth-century interiors so admired by Mrs. Wharton, which preceded the Modern movement by twenty years, perhaps even preparing the eye for the starkness of the International Style. John Fowler in England, especially in the years of his association with the American-born Nancy Lancaster, and the big Paris–New York firms such as Alavoine and Jansen—Stéphane Boudin and later Henri Samuel—were directly influenced by the ideas of Wharton and Codman. Wharton as well as those who took her ideas and ran with them represented a theory of decoration and interior architecture since they were dealing primarily with existing rather than new structures. In England it was the fashion to restore old houses anyway and there were so many handsome ones that wanted restoring. In America this was not the case. As had been observed from our beginnings, Americans are always moving, houses and things tend to be sold and dispersed rather than passed on, and there is a constant need for new housing since the existing body of Colonial and nineteenth-century domestic architecture has always been minute in terms of the demand. On top of that, it has never been intellectually respectable to live in the past in America even for creative reasons. As we are not a coherent integrated society in terms of terrain or attitudes, there has never been a moment when we lived under one official taste. Yet for all the current complaints about the glass houses and white boxes of the International Style it is to this aesthetic that a present-day school of American decoration owes many of its attitudes. The International Style and its mother institution, The Museum of Modern Art, paved the way for the abandonment of historical



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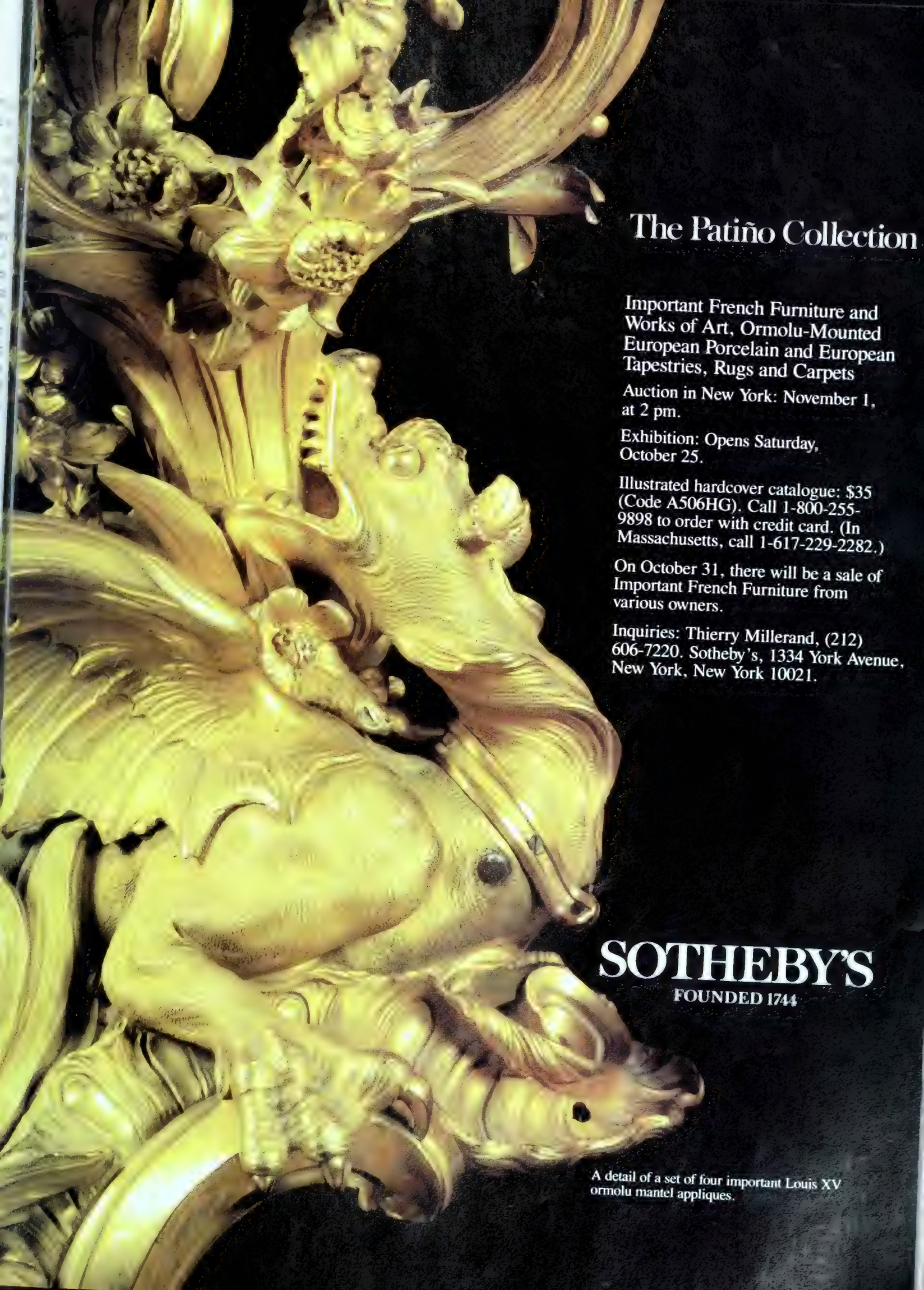
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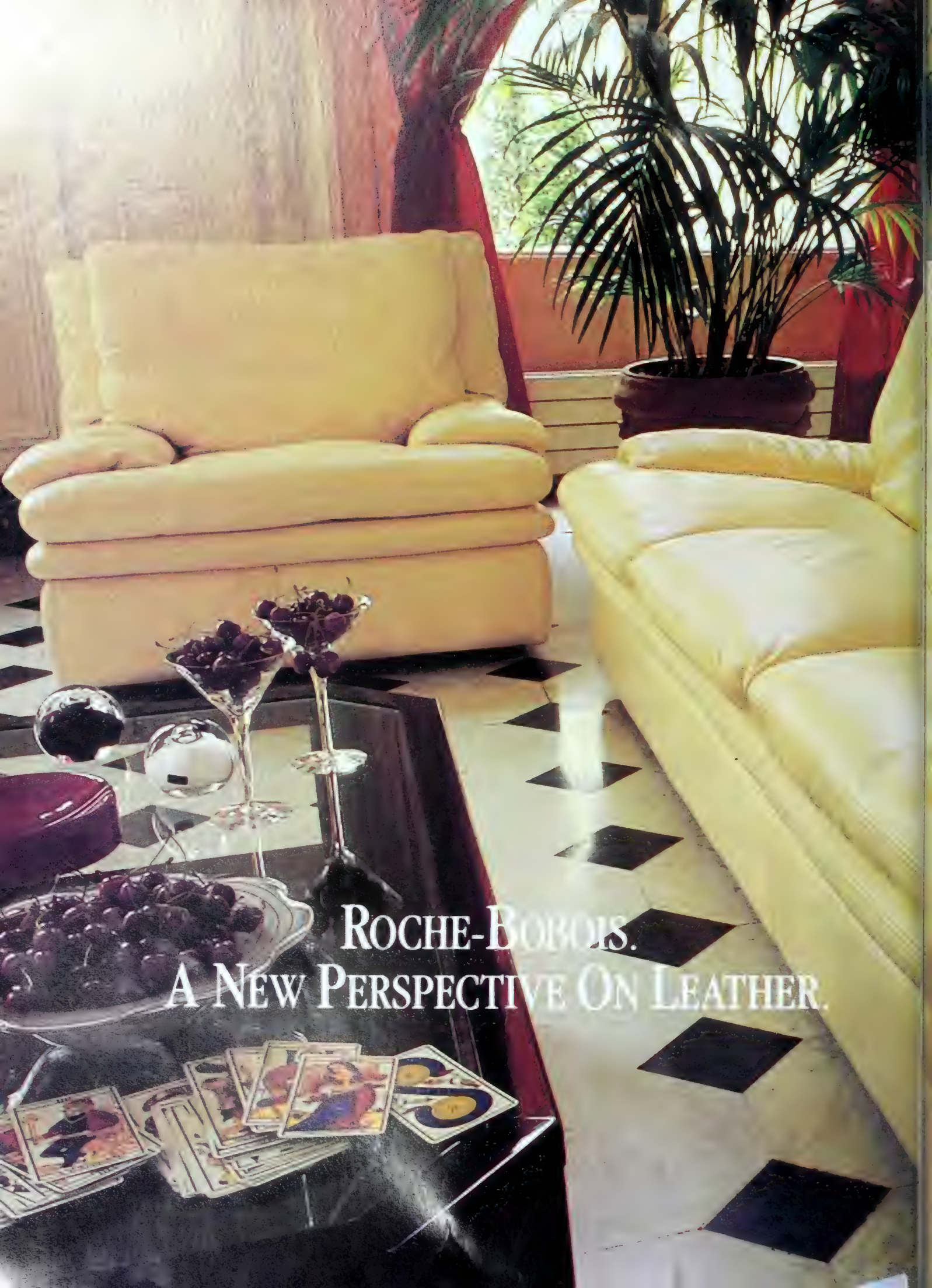
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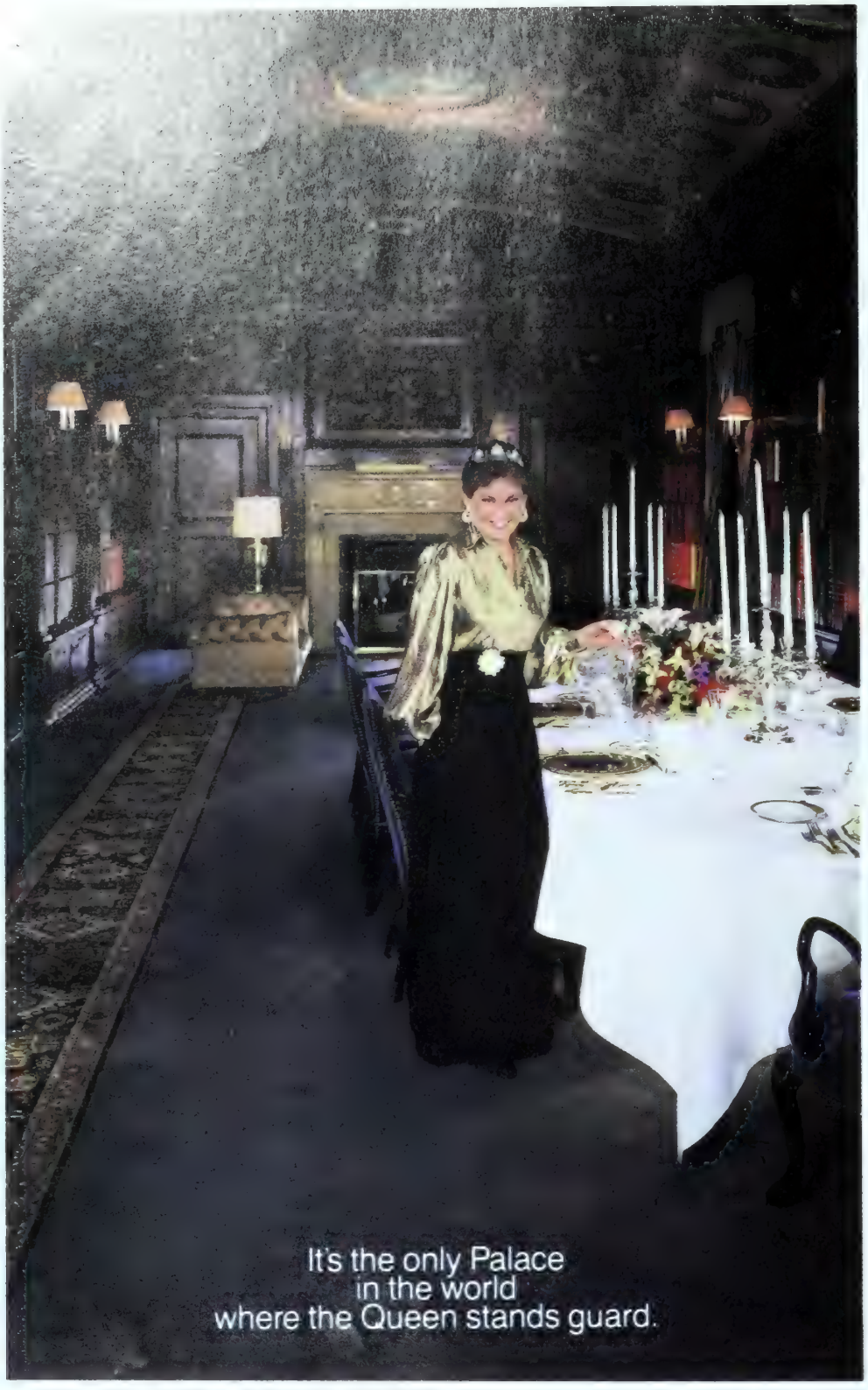
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conventions governing the treatment of walls, ceilings, doors, windows, and fireplaces; banished fancy fabrics, the precious object, and art related to the décor; admitted the limited use of antique furniture as pure form. It was found that by stripping eighteenth-century furniture or painting it white the sculptural quality was further enhanced. The result was the high-style American interior of recent times, based on something completely different than the interior of an English country house. In the 1970s you could barely say the name John Fowler, except in a small circle very confident of its taste, much less mount a major English-country-house exhibition. Today the International Style is passé, but then so is the traditional American way of decorating with antiques. The current desire for elaborate textiles, porcelains, bronzes, silver, furniture of all periods, portraits, architectural caprices, conversation pieces has not resulted in correct, polite neo-Georgian interiors. The American taste in the 1980s is for a grander antique than in the past. Gilded furniture and fittings are back. Palace, not provincial, antiques are gaining ground again. William Kent and Thomas Hope have it hands down over Sheraton and diluted Adam styles. The big urn lords it over the little narrow-necked vase. We want to eat off eighteenth-century plates and arrange flowers in beautiful old porcelain bowls instead of putting them all behind glass. And well-executed marbling or graining is preferred *any day* in a room with some aspirations to a white-walled setting. Even so, the fundamental lesson of the Modernist tradition remains. Americans like old things, but arranged in a clean uncluttered way in spaces that refer to the past without climbing back into it. Which is why so many Americans literally felt at home in a museum installation at the National Gallery. Because of the Englishness of their own taste the English couldn't figure out why the damasks, wallpapers, matting, wall colors, door frames, hanging of pictures, and arrangement of porcelain could have such an appeal when they were only approximations of the real thing. The message to us was purely visual: first-quality art, furniture, and objects displayed to advantage in an American setting—state-of-the-art decoration, in fact. □



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THE CLIENTS I LOVE

By Mark Hampton

The telephone rings. "We would like to talk to you about decorating our apartment." What does a decorator think? First, you wish you could see the person and the apartment at the other end of the line, because sometimes a decorator and a client can never achieve rapport in the realm of taste. After that, you wonder whether the caller is interviewing dozens of other decorators and whether they have just had a falling out with their current decorator. In any case, the first phone call is not a point at which you are filled with cheerful anticipation. You usually rely on that very uncertain realm of impressions made by a voice, then consult your calendar and either make or not make an appointment.

Let's forget about the false starts and the misfires because this is about the sort of experience that makes the business of interior decorating worth all the headaches that seem to be part of the job. You *do* know about the headaches: horrible delivery lags, dye lots that are wrong, orders that are lost and never processed, worse still, orders that are incorrectly filled. And this short list does not include one's own mistakes, those self-induced headaches.

The particular clients I want to talk about exemplify the interaction that a decorator prefers in his work, and I am glad to say that there have been numerous examples over the years. This young couple is one for whom I have decorated and remodeled two apartments and one house. "With whom," I should say, rather than "for whom," because after working together all this time we are more of a decorating team than a decorator and his clients.



Blank rear walls had disfigured the 1920s house until they were opened with a pedimented door to the garden and a round window above.

The apartment I went to see after their first phone call was in a building dating from the period after World War II—modern but with good plaster walls and spaces not dominated by the projecting beams and protruding columns that later came to ruin so many contemporary apartment rooms. It consisted of a large living room, a dining room, pantry, kitchen, maid's room, three bedrooms, and three baths. Since there were no children, there was plenty of space, and after a very pleasant meeting, it seemed established that we would get busy in the near future and start working together. The first thing to think about, as is usually the case, was the floor plan of the apartment and the question of exactly how many changes involving construction we had to consider. One of the bedrooms could be turned into a small library, and the entrance hall needed reworking not only to make it more handsome but also to create a large corner in the adjacent living room for a grand piano, which meant moving an opening.

Converting one of the bedrooms to a library was more complicated. It would obviously be the bedroom nearest the living room, and after some discussion, we all agreed that it would be far better, since the bedroom in question actually adjoined the living room, if there were tall double doors leading from one room to the other. That decision led to the raising and widening of the door into the dining room as well. It was suggested by this young woman, whose name is Karen, that it would be nice if there was a change in the floor levels, and why didn't we consider going up a step to the library. Why not indeed? This was the era of platforms and rooms in which everything seemed to be sliced off on the diagonal. Although my own attitude concerning a space is to acknowledge its physical shape, it was a welcome relief to find that rather than being confined to a timid view of dealing with bland rooms, I was going to be able to make some real changes and some real improvements. At first, numerous sketches and renderings were required. It is often the case that a decorator and a client who barely know each other rely to a great extent on this kind of communication.

After several months of work, the doorway had been moved and pairs of

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highly polished lacquer doors had been hung in the new taller openings. The architectural atmosphere was a great deal less bland than it had originally been. The raised library and the richly lacquered doors contributed to a far more individual architectural effect and went a long way toward eliminating that cookie-cutter effect common to modern apartments with so little detailing. At the same time the apartment became more formal and therefore a suitable background for the occasional antique piece. On the hall table, for example, stood a handsome seventeenth-century tortoiseshell-and-ivory dwarf cabinet containing beautiful little doors and drawers and compartments. In the dining room, which was painted a soft Venetian red, there hung a Queen Anne mirror with a frame of red-and-gold japanning, the mirror found well after the paint went up.

I noticed with interest and pleasure that, as the months went by, more lovely objects began to appear. Every time I would visit the apartment—and certainly after a job is completed, those visits become less frequent—I would see something just brought back from London or picked up at the Winter Antiques Show or sent up on approval from a shop on Madison Avenue. Part of the fun of working with this couple is the fact that they have an inexhaustible curiosity about the places and things I love myself. If on their way to London they would ask what I thought a good weekend would be and if I would say, for instance, go up to Derbyshire and see Chatsworth, Haddon, Hardwick, Sudbury, and Kedleston, they would invariably return full of news about Derbyshire.

Rather than being finished with decorating, they were just beginning. It is a wonderful sight for a decorator to watch rooms he has been involved with achieve greater depth and quality through the owner's own taste and activity. But there are two other categories of rooms that immediately come to mind. One is a little dull but not disastrous, namely, rooms that become petrified and never change. It is sad but I have actually had people tell me they were going to take Polaroids of the tabletops in order to keep things in place. I always say to clear things off instead because the objects will never go back to the same places and that is



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It is a wonderful sight for a decorator to watch rooms he has been involved with achieve greater depth and quality through the owner's own taste and activity

what keeps a room alive. The other category is even sadder: rooms that are spoiled by new acquisitions that violate the original concept.

The arrival of babies meant that a move would eventually be necessary, and one day, a few years later, I got a call from Karen and Peter asking if I would like to see an apartment that was probably going to become theirs and that needed work done on it. We made a date to meet in the lobby of the proposed new apartment, and the minute I heard the address I was filled with eagerness because the building in question had been designed in the 1920s by my favorite apartment-house architect, Rosario Candela, an Italian-born American who was responsible for the most beautifully planned and detailed apartments in New York as well as one marvelous building I know of in Chicago. The new apartment was not disappointing. It was a duplex with lots of south light. It had exceptionally good woodwork and plaster cornices and fine proportions in general, which is typical of Candela's work. Just as the contemporary architecture of their first apartment influenced the decoration, the neo-Georgian architecture of the new one provided the basis for this one. Obviously you can add moldings and paneling to rooms where they did not exist before, and you can strip them from rooms where they *do* exist. How much nicer, however, if the basic architecture is sympathetic to the desired style of interior design.

Of course, there were changes, some of them more extensive than others. The kitchen, pantry, and servants' rooms were radically overhauled, and the bathrooms needed attention. Once all that was under way, the job of decorating could begin. The upholstered furniture from their rather modern apartment was recovered, and the lines of the arms and backs were made softer to correspond to the architecture as well as the increasingly traditional collecting interests of Karen and Peter. If you are ever inclined to think that custom-made upholstery is an extravagance, I can only remind you that it is awfully convenient, after five or fifteen years of use, to be able to say to the upholsterer that you would like to recover that or that piece and, while he's at it, would he please change this arm design or that back height. Mrs. Sherrill at McMillen has just moved a bunch of thirty-year-old furniture into the *ninth* house of a longtime client. Now that is not extravagant.

What had begun as a few pieces of blue-and-white Chinese porcelain acquired as accessories in a blue-and-white bedroom had mushroomed into a lovely collection of very good pots and vases and bowls, mostly Kang Hsi, much of it stored away because the collection had long since outgrown the bedroom. All this terrific porcelain was able to play a major part in the decoration of the new living room: pieces were arranged on the walls on brackets made just for the job from a design of John Fowler's—cream and white to match the glazing of the walls.

The stair hall, upstairs and down, is painted the same soft Venetian red as the former dining room. All the pictures and objects and most of the furniture from the previous apartment seem more beautiful in the new apartment, and that is what one would expect, since, after all, the new apartment is more beautiful itself. Equally important is the personal quality that develops after several years of collecting and acquiring the things that are needed to complete the decoration of a house. Once again, I experienced that cheering sensation of increasing appeal whenever I visited Karen and Peter in their new apartment. Beautiful knife boxes might appear in the dining room. Or perhaps a lovely bucolic English landscape over the library sofa. If the occasional old piece disappeared completely in the wake of a new acquisition, the reply to my inquiries about current whereabouts would always be, "Oh, that will go to a house in the country some day." And last year a


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third episodic message appeared on my desk saying, "Karen and Peter want you to take a look at a house they just bought in the country."

For the third (and I hope not the last) time, we walked through an empty dwelling. This one is an enchanting fifty- or sixty-year-old house—with funny wings and sloping slate roofs and a beautiful colonnaded front veranda—reminiscent of a Virginia house but standing, instead, under enormous old New York maple trees at the end of a stupendous maple-lined lane. Because the house is picturesque, with lots of French windows leading out to the lawn, it could be decorated in any of several moods. It could be whimsical and flowery. It could be done in a chaste Colonial farmhouse style. It could have serious antique furniture, for that matter. While we chatted about these possibilities, I was told of a large number of pieces of nineteenth-century Heywood-Wakefield wicker furniture that Karen had been gobbling up during the past year or so and storing away heaven knows where. Then there were some odd-looking but delightful pieces of turn-of-the-century upholstered furniture, one of which is sitting today in the living room of this house still in its old cretonne slipcover, although we had to add a little ruffle along the bottom since it had shrunk somewhere along the way.

The question of which style to decorate in was therefore answered by the mood of the things that already existed and that were just waiting to find a home. The finished living room has a distinctly American turn-of-the-century look with its dark lacy wicker furniture and its fanciful upholstery, all sitting on raffia mats and covered in old-fashioned cotton materials. You can almost picture Mark Twain puffing away on his cigar there with a bank of ferns and fuchsias in the background.

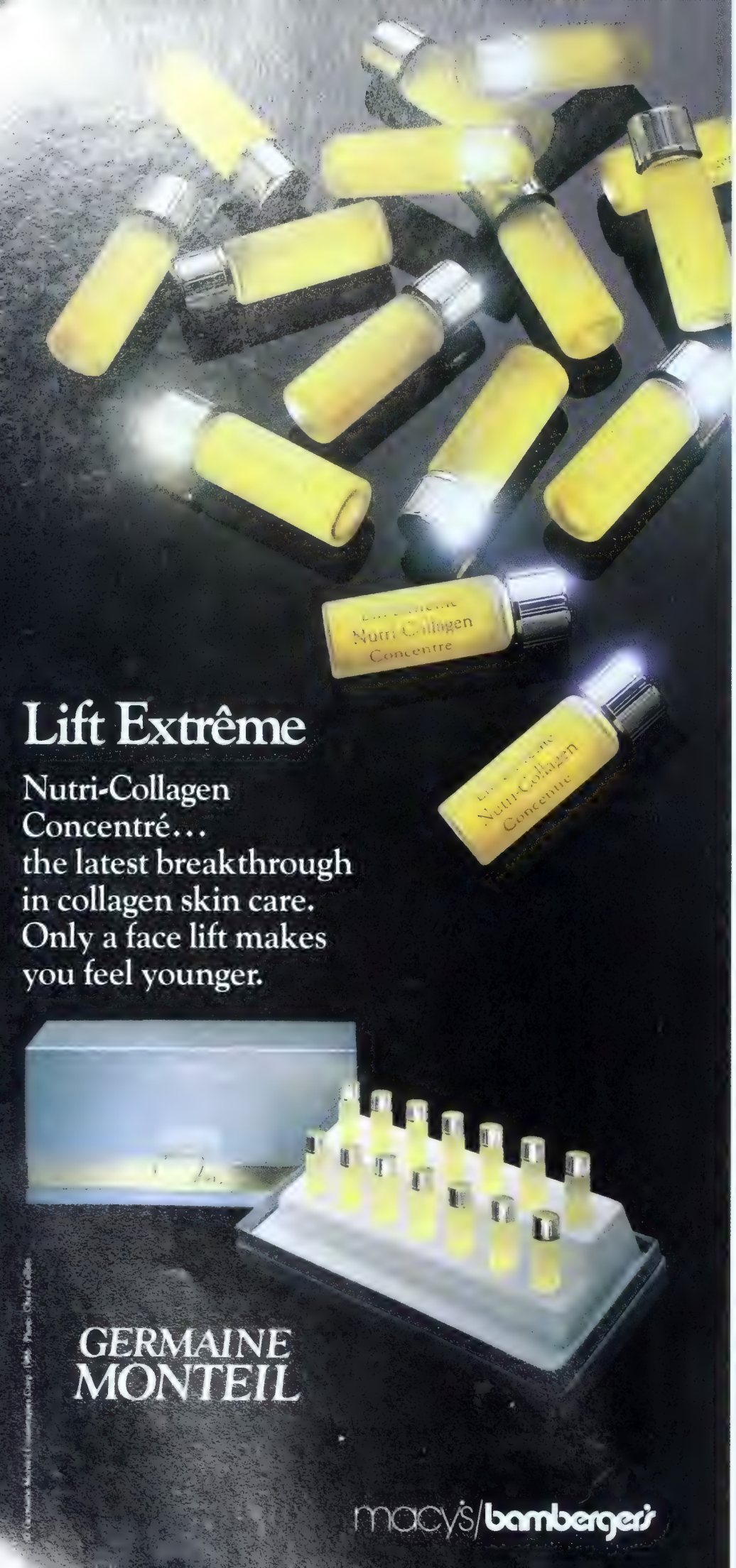
We were able to indulge in exterior decoration as well. The back wing of the house had, in its original configuration, bedrooms upstairs and downstairs, one over the other. The outside walls of these two rooms made up half an octagon, but the center wall, intended for the bed, was totally blank and surprisingly ugly from the outside. Since the lower of these two bedrooms was destined to become a garden room, we opened up the blank wall



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with yet another pair of French windows, which on the exterior we surrounded with pilasters and a nicely made pediment, copying a design we found in a book on Annapolis houses. (Annapolis houses have wonderful woodwork.) The new garden plan is centered on this recently created doorway, and, as a result, the house has a real honest-to-goodness functioning garden entrance.

This week I went up to hang some pictures with Karen and Peter. It is very easy with three people: one to keep track of the hammer and nails, one to keep track of the ruler and pencil, and one to make the holes in the newly papered walls. As usual, there were lots of pleasant surprises. An enormous and completely wonderful service of Staffordshire earthenware had arrived from some auction room or other and had taken over the Welsh dresser in the dining room. On an entirely different decorative wavelength, the little wooden bedside lamp from Peter's childhood nursery had somehow resurfaced and was happily ensconced in their five-year-old son's bedroom. I felt very much at home, and as I hung a set of plates that Karen had found which were decorated with bows and flowers, the bows resembling those on the little girl's bedroom wallpaper, I took great pains to put the nails in a dark part of the pattern of the paper because I thought (hoped) that in a few years I would probably be taking the plates down and hanging posters of Bruce Springsteen or whomever and I wanted to be sure the nail holes from a previous era would go unnoticed. These jobs are never finished, and the future has lots of lovely surprises in store. □

When decorator and client barely know each other, sketches and renderings may be the means of communication

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UNDER SIEGE

A single man's house is always fair game

By Eugene J. McCarthy

A man's house, that is, a man living alone, in house or apartment, may be his castle, but if he is not on guard, it will not long be his home. The house or apartment of a bachelor is almost always under attack, by persons, men and women, acting as men and women always do, according to Aristotle, under some aspect of good.

The attack on the home may come from strangers, or near strangers, or casual visitors, but more often it comes from close friends and from relatives. It may come from males, but more often, according to current cultural attitudes, it will come from women, sisters and daughters especially.

Any and all of these types of persons are prone to make suggestions about a man's home, how it should be decorated, furnished, how it should be run. They may even do things to it, with or without his approval, sometimes when he is watching, sometimes when he is not watching—things they would never think of suggesting or doing to a woman's domicile.

The potential aggressors are no respecters of wealth, or of rank, or of standard of living. They are as likely to direct attacks on a Fifth Avenue apartment, decorated and furnished in the highest and most expensive style, as on the most modest of male living quarters.

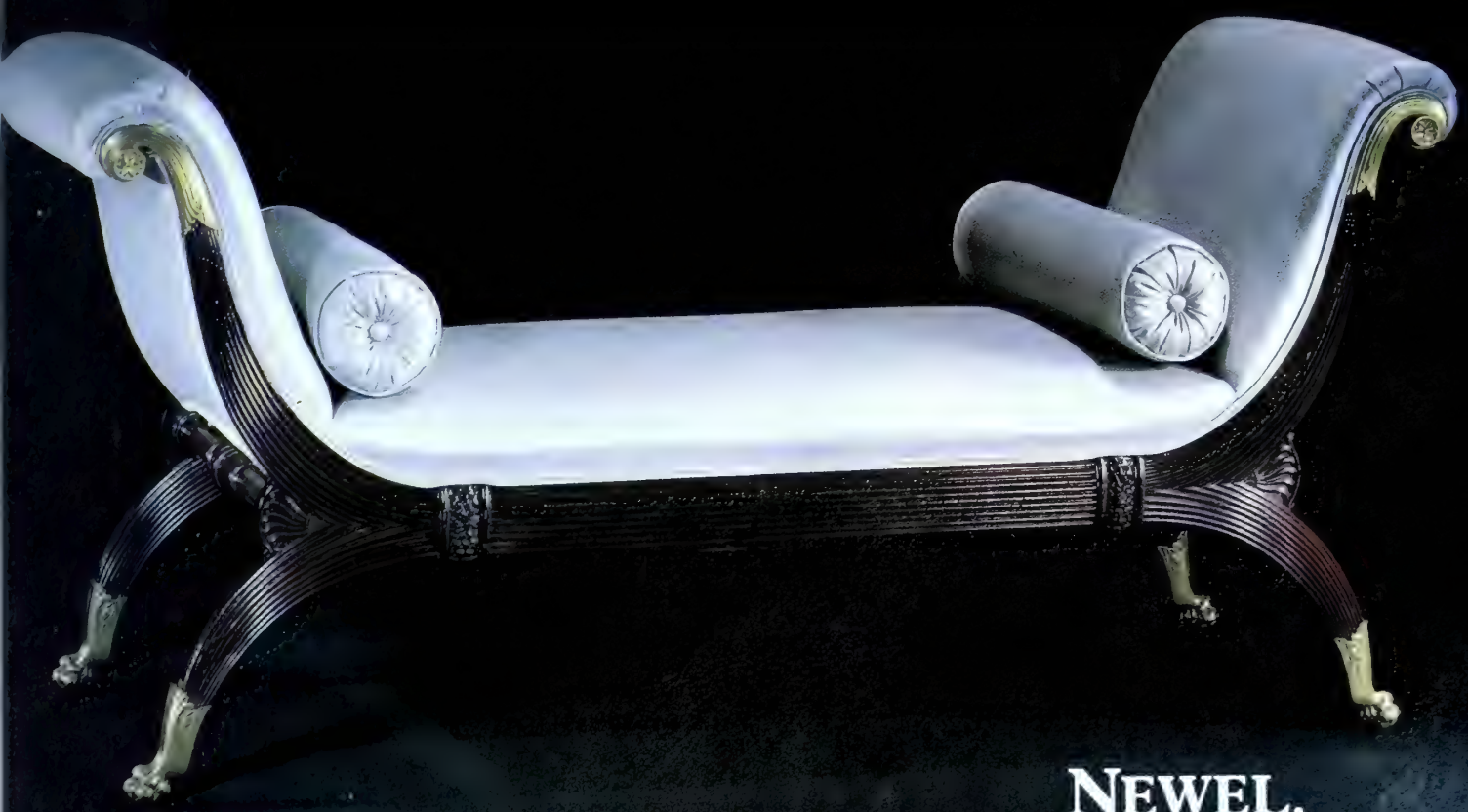
The first challenge is usually negative, restrained, and subtle. Sometimes it is preceded or accompanied by an apology. At the higher and more sophisticated levels of existence, it may be no more than an offhand mention of a decorator, who would "certainly be challenged by the architecture of the building, by its internal lighting or its exposure."

In cruder forms, at more common and more modest levels of existence, intervention may come in reference to condition of slipcovers or curtains, or without words, a not-so-surreptitious running of a finger along a windowsill, across a tabletop, a picture frame, or a lamp. This action may be followed by a questioning announcement that one's cleaning person needs another day of work each week.

These negative attacks can usually be ignored without lasting harm to friendship or to family or personal relationships. In some cases they can be accepted, acceded to, without yielding or sacrificing the integrity of one's home.

It is from the positive frontal attacks that the serious threats arise. This aggression against a man's home often begins in seemingly harmless suggestions that new curtains would brighten

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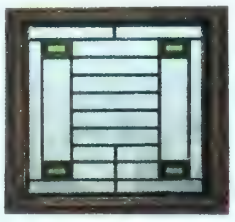
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Schumacher's Frank Lloyd Wright Collection. The prairie genius at home in today's executive suite.



A prairie house art-glass window designed by Wright.

Starting with his pioneering prairie houses in the early years of this century, Frank Lloyd Wright shook up the design establishment of America and of the whole world. Mies van der Rohe, describing the effect of a Wright exhibition in Berlin in 1910, wrote, "The encounter was...to prove of great significance to the European development. The work...presented an architectural world of unexpected force, clarity of language, and disconcerting richness of form."

The prairie houses proclaimed not only Wright's architectural genius but also his lifelong involvement in *all* the things that defined a living space. Furniture, lamps, rugs,—even ashtrays. All of these served as grist for his ubiquitous interests and each seemed to offer him rich opportunities for finding unique and original solutions.



The 1955 "*Design 102*," fabric designed by Wright for Schumacher.

Many of Wright's long-lived design ideas and thoroughly Wrightian solutions can be seen in the up-to-the-minute executive suite shown on the facing page. Located in Chicago's sleek new Olympia Centre, the suite, designed by Richard Robb & Associates (designers Richard Robb and Douglas Nickless), highlights designs from the dramatic Frank Lloyd Wright collection assembled by F. Schumacher & Co. with the curatorial cooperation of the Taliesin Foundation.

Wright's wide-ranging involvement with Schumacher, incidentally, dates to a 1909 order for "goat's hair satin" to be used on furniture in Chicago's historic Robie house. (Robie house was selected by a panel of architects and art historians as one of two outstanding houses built in the United States in this century; the other house, also by Wright, was Falling Water.) Orders for Schumacher fabrics continued through the years; then in the 1950's, Wright himself designed a line of fabrics and wallpapers *for* Schumacher. A fabric from that cooperation continues to be a popular design and can be seen on the upholstered bench cushion in the lower left photo.



Chevron Repp, a woven based on art glass, D.D. Martin house, Buffalo (1904).

Schumacher's current Frank Lloyd Wright collection includes well over a hundred items and employs themes and motifs that span almost all the years of Wright's prodigious career. In the main photo here, the *Imperial Triangle* rug, the dramatic *Imperial Peacock* print on the lounge chairs and the *Imperial Border* on the wall are all based on Wright's designs (1916–1922) for the celebrated Imperial Hotel in Tokyo. The *Geometric* wallpaper and the side chairs' *Liberty Weave* fabric are based on Wright designs for *Liberty* magazine covers (1926–1927); the desk chair upholstery is *Storer House Matelasse* based on Wright's unique concrete "textile" block construction in the famed Hollywood private house (1923); the *Tower Sheer* at the windows is borrowed from a frieze on the unexecuted tower for St. Mark's-in-the-Bouwerie, N.Y. (1929). All in all a compendium of, and an homage to, the genius of Frank Lloyd Wright.



The Wright chair, ca. 1904. Behind it, a cotton print based on art glass, Francis W. Little house, (1912–14).

Whether designing a distinctive office or a home of unique quality, for almost a century, knowing interior designers, decorators and architects have sought out the showrooms of F. Schumacher. Whether seeking authentic traditionalism, or authentic modernism; whether fabric, wallcovering or rug, they've always been—and continue to be—sure that an inspired answer awaits them at Schumacher.

For a booklet that illustrates the Frank Lloyd Wright collection in more detail, send $3.00 to F. Schumacher & Company, Box FLW, 79 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016.



Schumacher's Illustrated Notes on 20th Century Taste. One of a series


The Prairie School Tradition



The potential aggressors are no respecters of wealth, or of rank, or of standard of living

a room, and an apparent unselfish offer to help in the selection or even to make the selection. The breakthrough, or break-in, may come with a gift of a throw rug or a pillow or two, followed by the suggestion that the room colors do not match the rug or pillow. The lamps in a man's house, too, are easy and early targets of the remodelers or refurnishers. The lamps are especially vulnerable to attack if they are made out of old shell casings, fire-extinguisher tanks, baseball bats, used wine bottles, or old cornets.

A man's kitchen is especially vulnerable and attractive as a target for women visitors, many of whom seem to assume that, despite women's liberation, as a carry-over from past separation of labor and of responsibility, the kitchen in a single man's home is partly, at least, in their jurisdiction. This carry-over from a more primitive age is something that women in the new society of equality should carefully avoid.

The intrusive action may take the form of an open takeover of cooking or other food preparation. In its less immediate and aggressive form the intrusion is likely to show in the rearrangement of kitchen cupboards (daughters, according to my observations, are most likely to take this action). After the rearrangers have been given the run of a kitchen for any length of time, the man of the home is likely to find on going to the cupboard, in trusting Mother Hubbard manner, not a bare cupboard but one changed, changed utterly. He is likely to find dishes where he once kept cooking supplies; cooking supplies where once glasses stood, etc. Cooking utensils are likely to have been moved according to some mysterious logic I do not understand: pot covers gone from the drawer under the stove—a place that seems a perfectly satisfactory repository—to the oven; frying pans removed from the oven and concealed in some secret place. One may find his refrigerator cleaned—rather, cleaned out. Good food that he had been saving for a week or two gone. And then there is the special case of vanilla extract. I have three daughters. Each, I have found, has a different preference for the placement of that cooking aid.

Bathrooms, next to kitchen, are in line of the reformers' fire. Sometimes the interventions are marginally acceptable, as when, for example, they take the form of gifts of matching towels. Or a new shower curtain, replacing one that was still good but hanging by only three or four clamps.... More often the intervention borders on the irresponsible and the insulting, as in the casting away of good soap remnants, or in the obvious, evidence-leaving act of cleaned mirrors, sinks, and medicine cabinets.

If the male homeowner has a dog, even the dog's rights and privileges and properties may become the subject of abuse. The dog's toys may be found, after the visitor leaves, in a neat pile in a corner of a room or in a hall. A rawhide bone may have been washed, much to the dog's displeasure, the dog dish run through the dishwasher, and even its blanket put into or through a washing machine. I have never seen or heard of these things having been done to a woman's dog or cat, or to their things, by anyone but the possessor of the pet, or with her permission. Not so in the case of men's pets.

The ultimate challenge, possibly confrontation, begins with the suggestion that pictures should be moved, raised or lowered, regrouped, or hung in some other room, possibly to be taken down altogether, given to a church bazaar or to the volunteer firemen's sale, or even thrown away. This move may have been preceded by a gift of picture or pictures or may be followed by such a gift, which the householder, or home-holder, must either put on his walls, terminate a friendship or relationship of some other order, or live under continuing duress to explain why he had not hung the picture, or what he had done with it. Worse than a gift of a picture is something like a mounted animal head (not likely to be given by a woman) or even a whole stuffed animal. William Manchester, in his early book on John Kennedy, reports how Vice-President Johnson



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Photo: Tosc

ESPRIT/KIDS

Tami Silber
Student, Age: 13
Jordana Silber
Student, Age: 10

I like having an older sister to boss me around sometimes and teach me things; but it drives me crazy when I'm watching T.V. and she changes the channel. So I call up some of her boyfriends and tell them that she likes them. Tami goes for guys who are shorter than she is, and slightly punky, but she gets embarrassed slow dancing with them. She loves the Violent Femmes and hates Madonna want-to-be's. If I'm upset, I go in my room and read Archie comic books. When my best friend comes to spend the night, we eat ice cream and play Bedbugs. I want to be older so I can see how it feels not having to do the work but having the children do it.

pursued the President, relative to the whereabouts of a deer head he, the Vice-President, had had mounted for the President, until the latter, finally, did put it on a wall in the White House.

The first intrusion of this kind probably occurred when a cave lady visited the cave of the first cave man who did the wall drawings in his cave, possibly in anticipation of the cave lady's visit. (Although it is generally assumed, without good evidence, that the early drawings were done by men, it is not necessarily so. The cave lady may have decorated her own cave.) In any case, the female visitor may very well have suggested to the cave man that he had done his drawings on the wrong wall, or that he had used a wrong color stone, or had not put the drawings in the best light, or that he had drawn them too high on the wall.

Next to a mounted head, giving some person a representation of his sign of the zodiac is most intrusive. He may not be into astrology, or may not like his sign, or the representation of it, a threefold risk. Whereas there is no sure defense against the picture-intrusion invasion, or possibly incursion, there are some evasive and delaying and diversionary techniques that are helpful. I have established themes for certain rooms. If the picture given me does not conform to the room theme, obviously and logically, or at least for the sake of consistency, it cannot be hung in the thematic rooms. I now have three such rooms—my living room, which is reserved for horses and dogs, accommodating only Currier and Ives prints or paintings of horses and hounds. My study, the second protected area, in which the rule that what is displaced must be a representation only of authors or artists whom I accept. I am now holding the line, with Walt Whitman, James Joyce, Cervantes, William Butler Yeats, Sean O'Casey, and Thomas More.

> Even the dog's rights and privileges and properties may become the subject of abuse

Third protected room, recently added to the list, is my dining room, for which, under extreme pressures to hang a gift picture, I declared that the theme was birds, limited to fighting cocks and Audubon drawings, but only of more or less domestic, or near domestic, game birds like grouse and wild turkeys.

The other rooms of my house, a second study, a hallway and staircase, two bedrooms, a kitchen, and three bathrooms, are still areas of controversy and of compromise.

The hallway and the staircase are areas of conflict, but within the limits of some principles. A new gift picture, if not definitely and clearly bathroom caliber, is given some testing, hanging time. Some gift pictures have stood the test and grace the walls of stair and hall. Others have been moved to secondary stops: my bedroom, where the standards for hanging are relatively high. My second study, which is a kind of halfway house of uncertain standards. Its walls now carry an enlarged photograph (Mathew Brady) of Abraham Lincoln, a satirical drawing of the United States in action, or in inaction, a nobly framed quotation from an Irish song of revolt, and a print of a painting by Jack Yeats, all gifts.

My loft bedroom is dominated by an oil painting, reproduced, not in oil, of George Washington, who did not sleep there. And the final resting place of gift pictures and other wall hangings, which include Saint Patrick's prayer, one painting on glass, and a scene in ceramics, are the walls of kitchen and of bathrooms.

There is, one must realize, high risk in this picture shifting. One may be caught, like Carl Sandburg's perfect chameleon, trying to cross a Scotch plaid, where, according to Sandburg, "he was a brave chameleon and died at the crossroads, true to his chameleon instincts."

One should be allowed to use desperate means in defense of one's house, and especially of one's home. □





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CZAR QUALITY

In his new London shop, Tzigany, Antoine Chenevière indulges his delight in grandiose and inexplicable Russian antiques

By Jean-Marie Baron

He wears his 37 years calmly and lightly, though they are heavy with experience. His quiet air and careful gestures notwithstanding, Antoine Chenevière seems to have accomplished a remarkable number of things. And for several months now he has looked forward with serenity to his newest challenge, an antiques shop specializing in Russian furniture from 1760 to 1830, which he has just opened on the elegant Dover Street in Mayfair, where the heart of London beats loud and clear. "It was the best possible location," he explains. "The one where you find the most important dealers grouped together. The Frenchmen Bernard Steinitz and Didier Aaron, whom I worked with for a year in Paris with Jacques Grange, are there in the West End, and the English, of course: Mallett, Partridge, and Richard Green, whose reputation is now established." And why the name Tzigany? "Oh, well, no doubt because I am Slav on my mother's side, Bulgarian, and because the word *tzigane* has always had the scent of dreams, the smell of adventure about it for me."



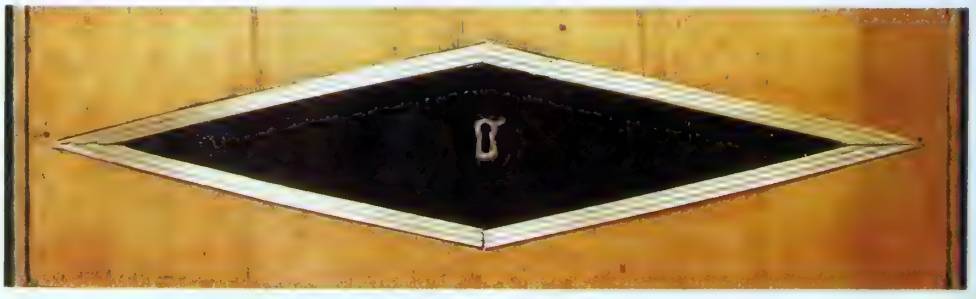
A longtime collector who bought his first object when he was fifteen, Antoine Chenevière opened his first business at twenty-five, in Geneva. A decorator because he loved art, he left his talented signature on the Parisian apartment of King Fouad II of Egypt, on Dr. Ivo Pitanguy's chalet at Crans-sur-Sierre, on the American ambassador's residences at Bern and Geneva, and on Princess Ira von Furstenberg's house, where the park slopes down to the banks of Lake Léman. Today Princess Furstenberg presides over public relations at Tzigany Fine Arts.

"By 1983, I had already specialized in Russian furniture," Chenevière resumes, "but I had gotten to the point of having to take a step forward. I hesitated between London and Paris, and I chose London, which has a busier, more international market. And I took an ambitious gamble."



The façade of the small nineteenth-century house is similar to all the others on Dover Street, but simply crossing the threshold reveals a different atmosphere, luxurious and calm. Originally there were eighteen attorney's offices here, but the walls were torn down to

Above left: Antoine Chenevière beside an imposing Austro-Russian desk. *Above right:* Rare late-18th-century Russian chair. *Below:* Ebony and brass inlaid drawer.



RICHARD DAVIES



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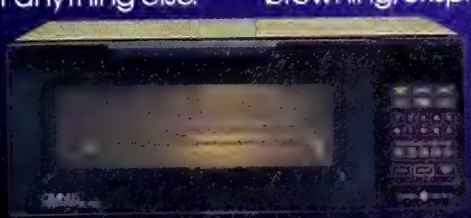
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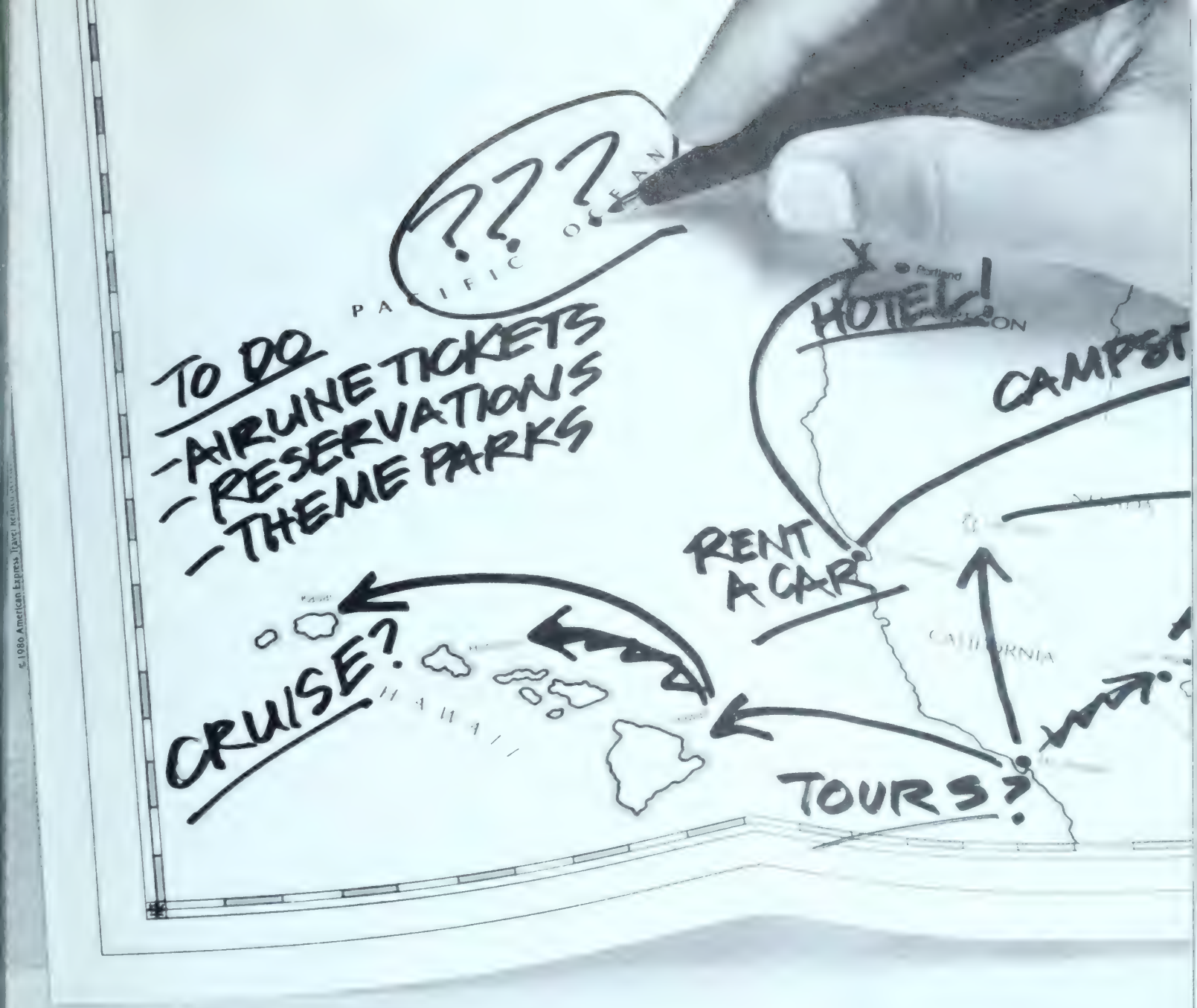
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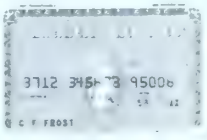
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expose 450 square meters of space, which became three nearly symmetrical rooms and an office, now isolated by fabric-covered screens. The carpeting is uninterruptedly beige, and the white walls are sponge painted, offering irregular reliefs that create a certain depth. There is a lot of furniture, of course, as well as *objets,* carpets, and chandeliers, but they are arranged for an impression of bareness.

"For you to really understand Russian art of this period," explains Chenevière, "I must tell you a story that sums up the folly and extravagance that reigned then, which we find in the workmanship of the most eccentric, most beautiful furniture. One day in 1800, Prince Volkonsky invited Czar Paul I to lunch. An immense oak forest, very rare and very precious in Russia, surrounded the Prince's palace. When the Czar, escorted by several hundred cavaliers, reached the Prince's lands, Volkonsky's own escort, coming to meet the royal guest, turned the carriage away from the road and conducted it toward the forest. To the Czar's astonishment, trees fell to either side as he advanced, creating a path some thirty meters wide all the way to the palace, which was high on a hill five kilometers away. During the night the trees had been sawed, one after the other, and a man left standing behind each one. The men pulled on ropes, and steadily the way was opened for the carriage, like the Red Sea parting before Moses.

"That," finishes Chenevière, "is what made me really love Russian furniture. Beneath a rigorous classicism, influenced by French furniture of the eighteenth century, there is always a seed of folly—something grandiose and inexplicable that makes for all its charm." He then shows me a mahogany trunk inlaid with brass, which belonged to the same Prince Volkonsky and which becomes both a desk and a safe. One can write on it, keep socks in it, and hide money in it, multiple functions that have no apparent relation to one another. Says Chenevière, "It's like a pair of pajamas that turn inside out and become a tuxedo."

He crouches in front of another chest, on top of which one recognizes the image of the emperor Karl Josef of Austria sitting at his desk, in a scene painted almost primitively. Chenevière touches the bronze lion's-head medallions and the medallions of ebony inlaid into the mahogany veneer. "Here is another very typical piece of furniture. It is quite architectural in its conception, but for some mysterious reason, the inlays are totally unconventional."

As we advance in our discussion, I learn that most Russian furniture is not signed because Russian cabinetmakers, with the exception of certain foreigners, notably the German Roentgen or Gambs, whom Peter the Great had called upon, were considered to be part of the household staff rather than independent artists. Things were not as in France, where cabinetmakers followed a long and painstaking apprenticeship before becoming masters. Given this, the story of Voronikhin, one of the most talented of Russian architects and cabinetmakers, is thrilling. The son of a farmer-general who controlled nearly thirty thousand people in the service of the Strogonoffs, he was a close friend of the Prince's son and had played with him since infancy. As a young man, he accompanied his friend to Paris for a year, and together they visited all the museums, galleries, and antiques shops. On the way home Voronikhin threw himself into designing furniture with such frenzy that when he arrived in Moscow he had more than two hundred drawings in hand. The Strogonoff son showed them to his father, who thereupon presented Voronikhin with a studio and forty workers. "It's like something out of a fairy tale," says Chenevière. "Contrary to the way things happened in France, this was the natural flowering of a genius, a genius who ornamented the most prestigious palaces, from Pavlovsk to Arkhangel'sk."

Standing guard on either side of an extremely rare military armchair in mahogany and brass, one of a series of twelve whose backs display a stylization of the cross of Saint George and whose weight is more than 25 pounds each, are two candelabras that once belonged to the prince of Hanover. Their beautiful swans' necks are reminiscent of armoires owned by the empress Joséphine de Beauharnais. In the neighboring room the table of inlaid malachite from the Ural region is attributed to the collection of Count Bobrinskoy. And more astonishing still is

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the sculptural alabaster vase resting on a flowered Aubusson carpet in the center of the room. Of Medici inspiration its color is uniformly creamy, but what makes it unique and typically Russian at the same time are the two heads of Bacchus, not sculpted on one side of the handles, as in the Classical tradition, but on both sides.

As we progress from discovery to discovery, Antoine Chenevière stops in front of a very imposing desk, surmounted by three busts in bisque signed by Elias Hutter, 1821. They belonged to the last king of Italy, Umberto II. "These are the busts of the Hapsburgs," he says, "and this heavy desk, which weighs 1,430 pounds, is a curious Austro-Russian mélange distinguished by the German genius for mechanics. It has not finished divulging its secrets to us." Indeed, as he moves the capital of one of the columns inside the cabinet and turns the button of a drawer, the mirror in the back slides away, revealing still more secret drawers and a jewelry box.

It is often difficult to attribute Russian furniture to the proper artists, but it sometimes happens that one can reconstruct the itineraries of some of the pieces, and the stories that go with them. The dining-room furniture in the shop window, in karelian birch and graced with a view of Saint Petersburg covered with snow, is a good example. It was acquired in 1910 at A la Vieille Russie in Paris by a rich Mexican collector who carried it back to his country, where it stayed for thirty years before coming back to Europe. It was discovered by Chenevière in a warehouse in Madrid and was sent to London to be restored; in a few days it will be with new owners in New York.

"But the most extravagant, most extraordinary piece of furniture," he concludes, "is this little 1838 table made of porcelain, mahogany, and bronze with a white opaline top, which a Russian artistocrat abandoned in a casino on the Côte d'Azur in order to pay his gambling debts. There is only one other like it in existence, in the museum of Kuskovo. The flowered plaques are products of the French tradition of the eighteenth century, but the beauty and charm of the whole come from the complete absence of practical consideration. The least shock to its exquisitely fragile legs would reduce it to dust."

We are now sitting in the more intimate office where Antoine Chenevière receives his clients—"like at home." An Aubusson carpet covers the floor under the light from a small Russian chandelier in delicate green glass, dated 1810. And all around, there are Russian military engravings from 1860 and works of the nineteenth-century French school representing circus acrobats with horses and performing dogs. On the generous ottoman, among decorating magazines and reference books, a folder full of photographs has been set. "That's the beginning of a book that will be coming out next year from Weidenfeld & Nicolson. The whole story of Russian furniture has yet to be told." □

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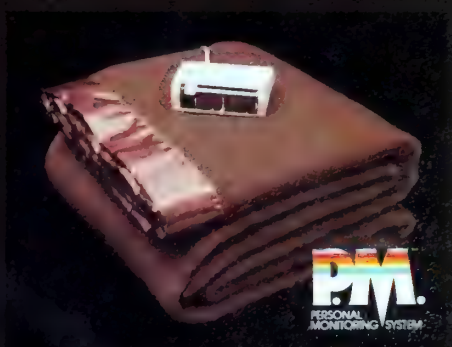
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THE TRADITION OF TAPESTRY

Ruth Scheuer's weaving workshop brings contemporary design to a Medieval craft

By Paula Deitz



Susan Maffei weaves the tapestry from the reverse side; the finished design emerges in front. The cartoon is transferred to the warp strings with indelible ink, and she uses her own acrylic painting as a color guide.

Few experiences can equal one's first impressions upon entering the Tapestry Museum at the Château d'Angers in the Loire Valley. Here in straightforward double-tiered rows is the world's largest tapestry series, *The Apocalypse,* based on the Book of Revelation. Seen in natural light, the rosy-and-blue hues of the wool, the individualized figures, stylized architecture, and decorative background patterns enthrall with their quiet beauty and set an aesthetic standard by which all other tapestries are judged.

Not surprisingly they became a major influence on the work of the contemporary tapestry designer–weaver Ruth Scheuer, who has used her thorough knowledge of early techniques as a basis for producing in her workshop modern tapestries that recall the same creative force. When she first saw the Apocalypse tapestries in 1979, it was exactly six hundred years since the last one was cut off the loom in the workshop of Nicolas Bataille. Scheuer was in France for a year on a special study program at the Manufactures Nationales des Gobelins. And if there is any sight that can perhaps equal the view at Angers, it is of the long rooms with tall windows at the Gobelins factory in Paris where the high-warp looms are set end to end with weavers working the tapestries from the reverse side, colored wools dangling from bobbins, while visitors passing in front see the smooth, finished designs emerge.

By the time Gobelins became a royal factory under Louis XIV in 1662, tapestry weavers had long been relegated to the role of copyists, making exact renditions of painted cartoons without the kind of individual judgments on backgrounds, colors, and shading that

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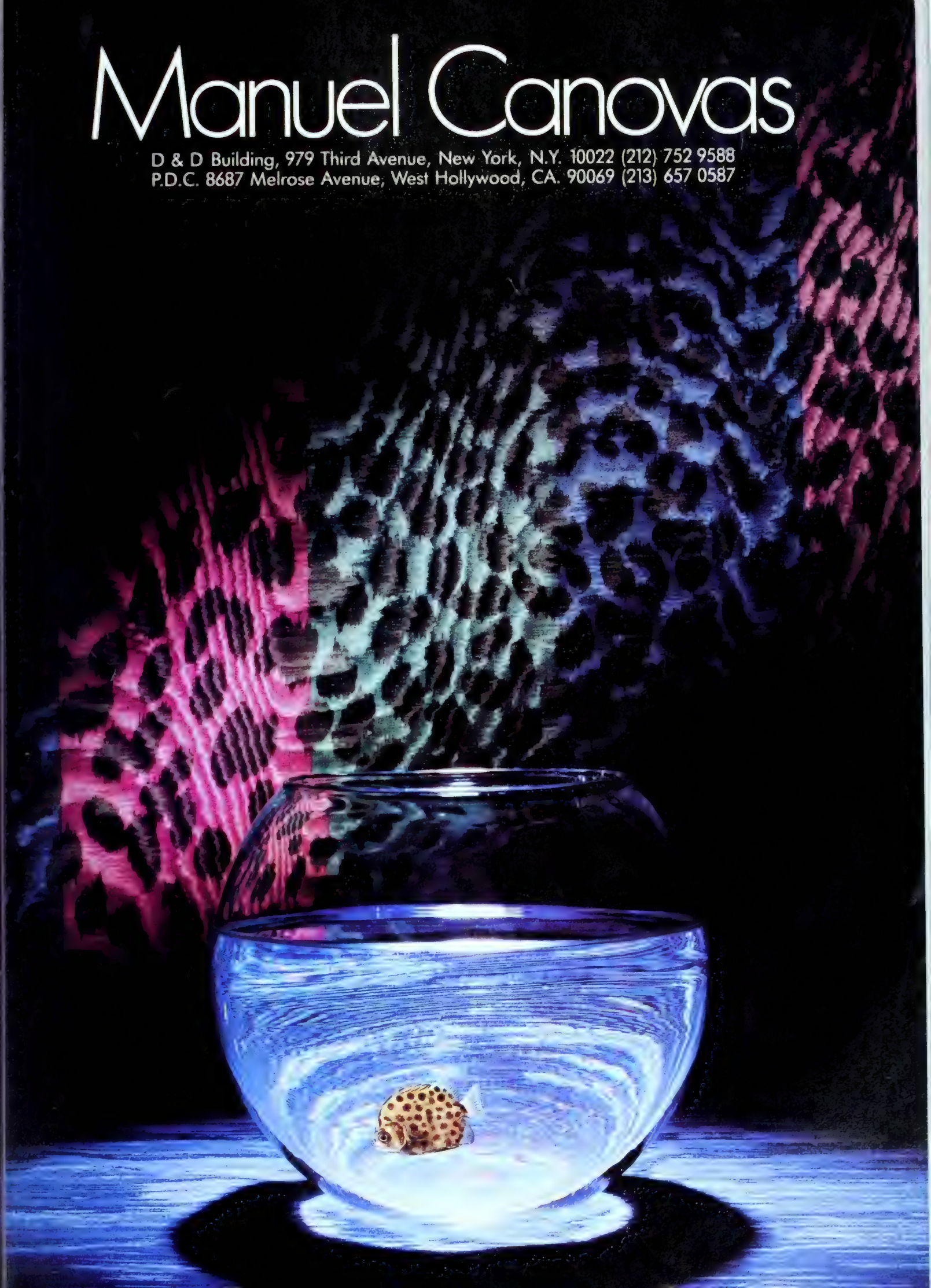


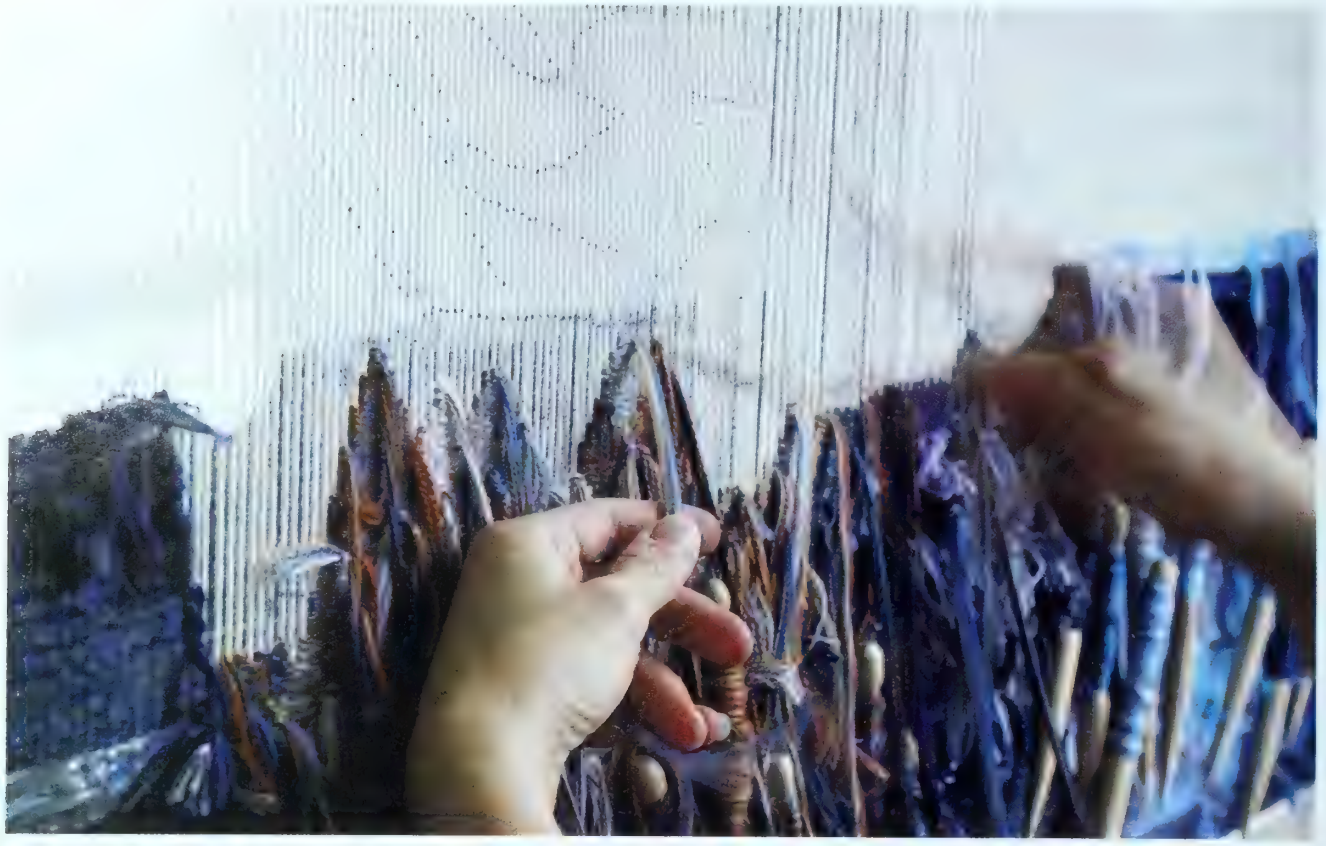
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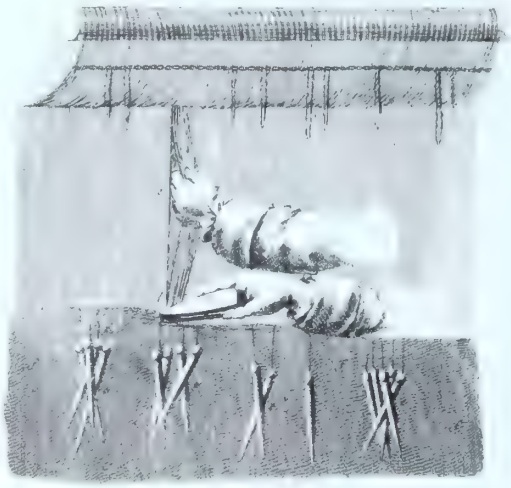




French beechwood bobbins are used as shuttles, *above*. Wound on each bobbin are four to eight strands of wool in several tones of one color or contrasting colors to achieve subtle nuances of shading and rich color. *Below:* A high-warp loom illustrated in Diderot's 18th-century *Encyclopédie*.

made early tapestries richly expressive of the craft. According to Scheuer, Raphael was the artist who insisted on this accuracy, thus changing the medium, when in the second decade of the sixteenth century he handed over to the Brussels workshop of Pieter van Aelst the cartoons for the Sistine Chapel series depicting the acts of the Apostles.

Before Ruth Scheuer went to Gobelins, she was already an established tapestry weaver. With a bachelor of fine arts in weaving from the University of North Carolina, she continued her work toward a master of arts degree in 1977 at San Francisco State University. During this period she worked with Jean-Pierre Larochette, who was brought to San Francisco by the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco to train weavers in the Aubusson technique on horizontal, or low-warp, looms, and specifically to weave into tapestry the cartoon for *California Poppies,* designed by artist Mark Adams for a 1976 museum exhibition. From this association Larochette, Scheuer, and others founded the San Francisco Tapestry Workshop, which produced over thirty artist-designed tapestries



between 1977 and 1983.

Still, when Scheuer arrived in Paris and began weaving on the vertical, or high-warp, looms, she profited from the exacting standards upheld by the Gobelins training. "My first project was to weave a perfectly round circle," she recalls, spreading out the resulting sampler on a table in her studio to show how many times she had to start over before no thread was out of place on the circumference. A more advanced exercise was to weave *rinceaux,* the traditional foliated scrolls that figured in background patterns of the Apocalypse tapestries. She found their precise techniques and discipline liberating; the cartoon outlines were traced on the vertical warp strings, which gave more freedom to develop the design—unlike weaving on top of the colored cartoon in the horizontal Aubusson method. Her new potential freedom, however, seemed to be in opposition to the Gobelins' other tradition of being no more than printmakers to original paintings.

Already in France the weaver and designer Jean Lurçat had earlier in the twentieth century brought a new vigor to tapestry and restored it to the fine arts by releasing it from a merely imitative role. In leaving Gobelins, Ruth Scheuer felt this same impulse "to make tapestry an original art medium." She was in good company, for William Morris, who had once visited the Gobelins factory, took an even stronger view: "It would be a mild word to say that what they make is worthless; it is more than that; it has a corrupting and deadening influence upon all the Lesser Arts of France."

Ruth Scheuer opened her work-

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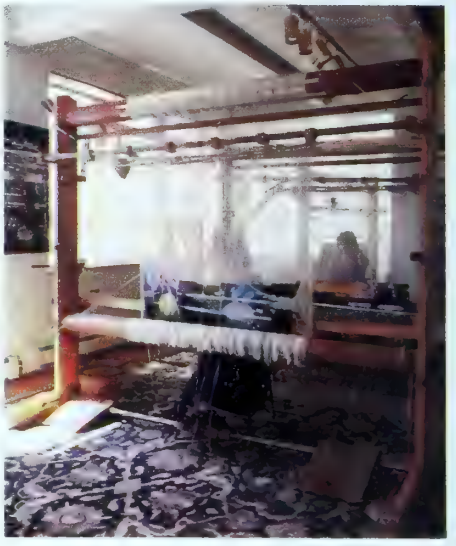
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shop, the Scheuer Tapestry Studio, at 2 Cornelia Street in New York's Greenwich Village on October 4, 1982 (coincidentally the saint's day for Saint Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of tapestry weavers). After only four years, she is expanding the activities of the studio to include a gallery and classroom—opening this month in new quarters on the second floor of 167 Spring Street in SoHo—in which leaded-glass partitions will separate observers from the weaving room. Still, the Cornelia Street studio has its own special charm, which derives from the beauty of the paraphernalia itself. In two large rooms on the tenth floor of a flat-iron-shaped building with windows on every side, the vertical high-warp looms stand in parallel rows on immense Oriental carpets. Stored on racks and spools, like an artist's paints, are over three hundred colors of wools—both crewel-weight and Persian-weight tapestry wool—along with some silk and metallic threads. On a windowsill rests the bobbin winder for the same kind of French beechwood bobbins used by Gobelins. Strands of similar shades or even different colors are wound on a bobbin to create an impression of a color in a blending process the French call *chiné*. To achieve a black, for example, one may mix navy, deep blue purple, red purple, and black. In a sense this brings the Scheuer tapestries close to Pointillism in painting as even contrasting colors merge from a distance.

In general, tapestry is defined as a woven fabric whose warp threads, those stretched at high tension on the loom, are completely covered by discontinuous weft threads forming a pictorial image. The vertical loom today differs very little from a diagram of one in Diderot's eighteenth-century *Encyclopédie*. The warp threads—Swedish cotton in Scheuer's studio—are stretched through heddles, every other thread to one heddle, and the second set to another. When one heddle is pulled, a shed opens up between the threads for the shuttle, in this case the bobbin itself, to weave the wool. Controlling the heddles by hand consumes time and energy, so Scheuer worked with John Shannock, a mechanical engineer, who updated the medieval technique with American ingenuity by designing treadles to operate the heddles, leaving the hands free to weave. The full-scale black-and-white cartoons for the tapestry are transferred by the weavers to the warp threads with indelible ink, marked around the whole thread since threads twist.



Ruth Scheuer in her studio

Sitting quietly in the main weaving room with four weavers at work, one listens to the hum of music always in the air. The weavers themselves give the appearance of playing organs and harps as their bare feet work the pedals and their fingers pluck the strings. The only other sound is of the heavy brass combs or beaters used to compress several passes of wool into place. As they work, they improvise and interpret to reproduce the originals designed either by themselves or by artists—it is a process of integration. Watching Ruth Scheuer work from a side angle, one can see how she both hatches and interlocks the wool threads from the back, which are techniques for switching or interpenetrating two colors in a way that appears smooth and seamless from the front, as can also be seen in the hanging mirror that faces the right side and hence the weaver. The real beauty of the process is watching the weavers build to a rhythm that takes into account the mechanical and creative decisions.

While the changes and adaptations of traditional techniques are a major contribution to this new approach to tapestry, the pictorial images selected for weaving have also combined references to the old mixed with modern ones, and have even continued the allegorical and narrative themes that have been the mainstay of the great tapes-

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tries. There is no mistaking a reference to the Cluny Museum's *Lady with the Unicorn* tapestries and their portrayal of the senses in the Scheuer series called *Impressions:* the tapestry *Hearing* depicts a woman's ear turned to a seashell, and *Smell* shows another woman bent over a luscious flower.

Almost half of their work, which is widely exhibited, stems from commissions for which Scheuer and her colleagues frequently suggest subjects and designs. The rest is based on their own original work or on paintings or photographs by other artists—recently they completed *Initiation,* a colorful moth by artist Joseph Raffael, to everyone's satisfaction. *The Jari River,* a tapestry which portrays a *verdure* setting of richly green trees and colorful birds, as in early tapestries, was commissioned by an engineer to commemorate a project in the Amazon region.

But the most moving and expressive commission of all came from St. John's Episcopal Church, an Armenian congregation in Massena, New York. This commission also recalls that large-scale tapestry came into being around A.D. 1200, when stone structures replaced wood and tapestry became the interior wall, serving as insulation as well as decoration. Because the woven technique gives great depth to the image, the scenes also became views as if from windows. As Ruth Scheuer says, "If you come into a room with tapestry all around, it is like being in a garden."

The Armenians in Massena, however, had not come from "life in a garden" but were survivors of the massacre by the Turks in 1915. Their church had stone walls and high Gothic windows, and Scheuer went there to listen to their stories before she designed the commemorative tapestry. This is the tapestry: through a Gothic "window," a view of Saint Gregory, who founded the Armenian church in A.D. 301, seated on top of a small Gothic church, miniaturized as in the Apocalypse tapestries. Haloed in gold thread, he holds a fluted cross in blessing over a peasant woman and her small daughter, who turns to look at the saint as crowds of women move on. The grapevine border meets the message in Armenian at top, chosen by the congregants, "For Hope and Faith." The child in the tapestry, now a woman in the congregation, survived; her mother, who sent her on her way alone,





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did not. When the daughter visited the studio for the cutting-off ceremony—celebrated always with champagne—she said quite simply and gratefully, "My mother has been reborn."

Many of the designs originate in photographs, and one private commission demonstrates Scheuer's desire to make the urban landscape a new motif and to educate the public to seek contemporary original tapestries with a new appreciation, particularly in the home. One evening when Scheuer visited clients in their apartment on the East River, a spectacular red sunset sky colored the view of the Queensboro Bridge to the south at the same time as the moon rose in a dark sky to the north over the Hell Gate Bridge. She lost no time in photographing both views out the windows and, using these photographs as guides for form and color, created two tapestries that now hang on the apartment wall. After the Apocalypse series, Scheuer most admires the Devonshire Hunting tapestries that now hang at the Victoria and Albert Museum and what she describes as "the abstract patterns in their representational imagery." This group crystallizes the themes of the hunt in the fifteenth century, and Scheuer with her acute sensibility has perceived a modern equivalent in a new series produced by the workshop last summer. The steed of the contemporary urban chase is undisputedly the taxi, and Scheuer, by photographing a stream of yellow taxis as reflected in the long display windows of Balducci's food palace on Sixth Avenue at 9th Street in the Village, has made a double portrayal of the hunt and of the good life, the delicacies that are one of its goals.

This panoramic view was divided into four parts, and Scheuer and three of her weavers each drew her own color rendition of one segment: Scheuer in colored pencil, Beverly Godfrey in pastels, Susan Maffei in acrylic, and Deborah Hildreth in watercolor. Full-scale cartoons were made from these, and each tapestry was woven according to the individual interpretation of the scene. These panels will hang in sequence in the new Spring Street gallery, a fresh creative concept—with a dollop of Pop Art and Photo-Realism—which no doubt in time will become one of the memorable symbolic views of the twentieth-century tapestry revival. □

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BACHELOR IN THE KITCHEN

By P. J. O'Rourke



PETER SIS

I'm the last man in America who can't cook. This is not to say I don't cook. I live alone and I cook for myself, if cooking is the term for putting baloney slices between pieces of bread. I can also cook a hamburger or anything that's willing to pretend it's a hamburger, such as a pork chop or a steak or those slices of baloney. I can cook anything flat which needs to be flipped only once and which can survive barbecue charring. (This leaves out eggs; they drip through the grill.) Not that I actually use the barbecue. Among the other cheflike things I can't do is light charcoal. I put the barbecue grill right over the stove flame. This saves cleaning up, if you don't count the stove, and I figure I'm never going to get that stove clean anyway. (Incidentally you can get a chicken to cook exactly like a hamburger if you beat it with a hammer first.)

I've tried cookbooks but to no avail. I doze off while reading them. The plots are bad, and the characterizations thin (for example, "Celery and spinach both lend color variation to salads"). And there are hardly any racy parts. Besides, even the most rudimentary cookbooks, such as those for Brownie Scouts, are of no use to me. I have a whole shelf of cookbooks with titles like *Cooking for the Complete Fool.* But the terminology foxes me. I know what blanching is. It's what people do when they look at my kitchen. But parboiling? Certainly that happens on the golf course. And what's braising? It sounds as though you're supposed to plate the food with bronze, like baby shoes. That *can't* taste good.

In the entire *Joy of Cooking* I've found only one recipe I understand. It's on page 231. I'll quote it in toto:

BARBECUED FRANKFURTERS, WIENERS OR HOT DOGS
Preheat broiler or grill.
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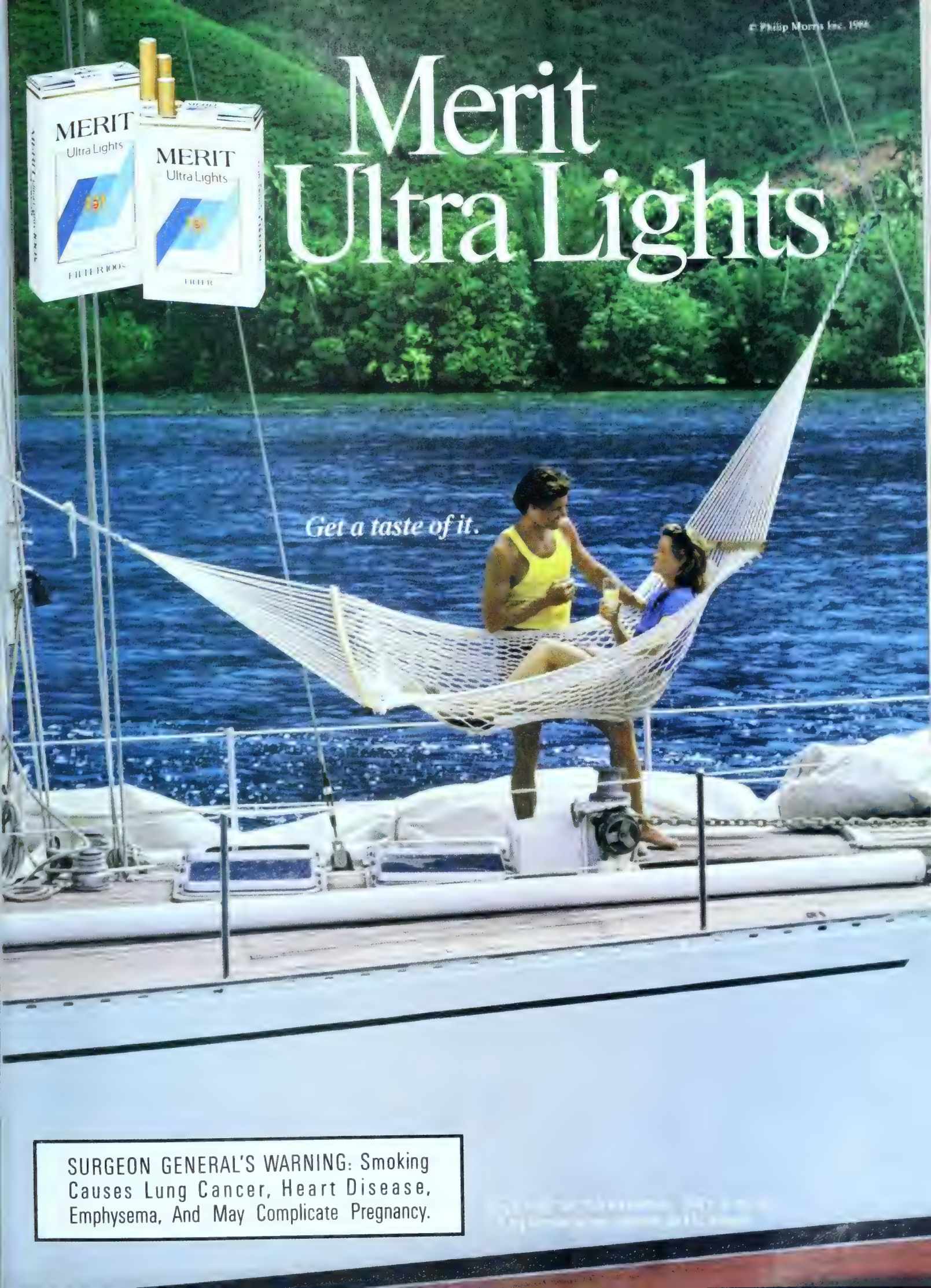
And that gets a little complicated toward the end.

Nor am I any help to others in the kitchen. You can make me beat egg whites, but I'll probably sneak off to the basement workshop and run the electric drill in them. And I will also botch the traditional masculine job of carving. Me slicing a turkey is something best treated the way Aeschylus handled Clytemnestra's murder of Agamemnon. The scene should take place out of sight somewhere. A shocked chorus can describe it to you later. I'm not even a good bartender, as my pucker-faced friends will attest after tasting the daiquiris I accidentally made with lemons instead of limes and into which I forgot to put the confectioners sugar. And finally I'm no good at cleaning up. Quite the contrary. I go into a spotless kitchen, make one cup of instant coffee, and the place looks like the wreck of the Hesperus.

I really don't know what's the matter. In that basement workshop I mentioned, I'm a reasonably handy person. And kitchen utensils are nothing but tools with food as the construction material. Although there are some crucial differences. Food won't hold still. A nail is a nail and it stays where it's pounded. But a casserole wiggles about, and the minute your back is turned it can leap right out of its covered dish and slather itself all over the inside of the oven.

Left to my own devices, I'll eat nothing but pastrami straight out of the delicatessen wrapper—maybe dipping it into the mustard jar if I feel like being a gourmet. I try to make up for this with creative grocery shopping. I wait until I'm very hungry before going to the store. Then I make strange impulse purchases that add variety to my diet: pickled duck eggs, aerosol lunch meat, beer-flavored ice cream, and so forth.

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And I vary my meals by using foods that come from different areas of the kitchen. I always make breakfast from things in the breadbox plus things in the refrigerator—buttered potato chips and a can of Coca-Cola, for example. Lunch combines items from the refrigerator and the cupboard and might be Cold Duck and Franco-American spaghetti with canned peas mixed in. (Yes, it sounds terrible, but they put odd things in spaghetti at chic pasta restaurants and charge like sin for it.) And dinner comes out of the freezer.

Frozen dinners let me use the one kitchen appliance I truly enjoy, the microwave. It's not the cooking I enjoy with the microwave. That's boring. I tried plugging it in next to my stereo so that I could watch a Stouffer's entrée thaw while listening to the new Katrina and the Waves album, pretending the microwave was MTV for food. But this was still boring. I just like to fool around with the machine and see what it will do to things that aren't food. I haven't made any valuable discoveries so far, but I have had a number of interesting negative experimental results. A microwave oven will not speed the drying time of spray-painted doorknobs. You cannot use it to loosen ice cubes in an aluminum ice-cube tray—many exciting sparks and a blown fuse. And microwaves are particularly bad at making rain-soaked dress shoes as good as new. By the time I'm done fooling around, the frozen dinner has usually thawed on its own, and I can put it between two slices of bread and have a cold sandwich.

I guess I'm just not fully domesticated. At some subconscious level I'd like to smoosh my meal together in one big bowl, gobble it in seconds flat, and bury what's left in the yard. It's not that I don't enjoy food. I would much rather have food than not have food. But my criterion for fine cuisine is the same as that for fine wine: let's make sure we have plenty of it.

A bite of caviar and a sip of champagne is swell. But it will never replace a two-pound T-bone steak, an armful of fresh-picked sweet corn, and a half-dozen merry, tinkling bottles of *Château Plenty*. And even I can manage this meal, though usually I can't find the corkscrew and end up using a spoon handle and a pocket knife. But

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the problem is, not only am I the last man in America who can't cook, I'm also the last man in America who doesn't care that he can't cook and doesn't talk about cooking endlessly.

This cooking mania is a bizarre and, to me, alarming change in masculine social behavior. I remember when it happened. It was the mid 1970s when my old pals suddenly quit talking about sports cars, baseball, and new fishing reels and began exchanging hints on omelette ingredients and tips about making their own mayonnaise. I was mystified. To my mind an omelette is just an egg with too much to do. And I've never understood why talk about eating is considered any more polite than talk about any other bodily function. But most of all, I felt left out. And I still do. I don't possess any cooking tips. Except, "Never use a food processor when wearing a necktie," something I found out the hard way.

The whole trend seems undignified. I find it hard to imagine Cato the Elder monkeying around with soufflé recipes—"*Delenda est egg yolks*"—or Sherman on his march to the sea sparing the summer kitchen at Tara so he could get the ingredients for Hattie McDaniel's pecan pie. I don't mean to be prejudiced. I don't consider cooking "woman's work." I just consider it work. Period. And work that I'm incompetent to do. I might as well be given a scalpel and told to perform an appendectomy. Indeed, I think my patient might have a better chance for survival than my dinner guest.

Besides, women have been hollering for a century about being trapped in pointless kitchen toil. Females all over America are fleeing the stove for more exciting labor in boardrooms and marketplaces. But no sooner do the women exit than we men rush in carrying $3,000 worth of silly French copperware, our heads filled with notions of salmon mousse. I don't get it.

Perhaps what we're seeing is not simply a switch in gender roles but part of a larger, even more alarming, change in American society. I have a feeling it's something we old-fashioned misfits, whose idea of fancy food is lamb chops with little socks on them, will never understand. Within recent memory there were just four principal types of restaurants in New York—traditional French, checkered-tablecloth Italian, steakhouse, and Chinese takeout. If you wanted to get exotic, you could go down to Lüchow's and have venison strudel. Now the restaurant section in the New York yellow pages looks like a roll call for the Conference of Nonaligned Nations. There is—it sounds like a grim joke, but there actually is—an Ethiopian restaurant. I hear an American Indian restaurant has opened. (Do they have pemmican on the menu? Do they have roast dog?) Soon there will be a Midwestern restaurant serving Meat Loaf Surprise with toasted marshmallows. (Personally I'll rush right out to try that one!)

It seems Americans these days will eat *anything*. First it was sushi. In my day swallowing live fish was reserved for fraternity initiations. Then there

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was nouvelle cuisine—the meal that asked the question, "When's dinner?" Finally people began dumping the entire pantry contents, manicotti and all, into their salad bowls. What would we have done twenty years ago if we'd found big wet noodles in the middle of our iceberg lettuce and beefsteak tomatoes? We would have thrown the thing at the waiter.

Americans will eat anything, and, then again, they'll eat nothing. Fat is bad for you, they say. Sugar is bad for you. Red meat is bad for you. Starch too. Caffeine is very bad, and if something has been decaffeinated, that's worse yet. Americans adore their food but seem to think it's trying to kill them. I believe this is typical of a certain stage in an obsessive love affair. And that's what we have here. Our country has an insane romantic fixation on food.

Surely this doesn't bode well for the nation. Great Britain, at the height of the Empire, limited itself pretty much to overdone roast beef. I don't believe the Spartans ate at all. The imperial Romans subsisted on a sort of thin gruel until the end of the Augustan Age, and we all know what happened then. Nations that get involved in an excess of lark's tongue and baby lampreys in aspic always come a cropper. Observe the history of France since 1870.

I would like to stand alone against this dangerous trend—stalwart, solitary, unbowed (and eating the slice of pizza with the works that I just had delivered)—but it's no use. One man cannot turn the tide of history no matter how good he is at frying baloney. So I acquiesce. I make up things to say about sauce marinara. I say, "My secret is honey; I use honey instead of olive oil and then put a shot of whiskey in it." (Remarkably, no one has ever questioned this.) But I don't tell anyone about the toasted cheese sandwiches I make by wrapping bread and Velveeta in aluminum foil and pressing it with a steam iron. I don't confess that I shake Tabasco sauce onto Underwood's Deviled Ham and eat it directly out of the can. And when my date orders me into the kitchen to mix up a little vinaigrette, I do so without complaint. But if the guests know what's good for them, they'll take that vinaigrette dressing home and use it to strip a pine dresser. □



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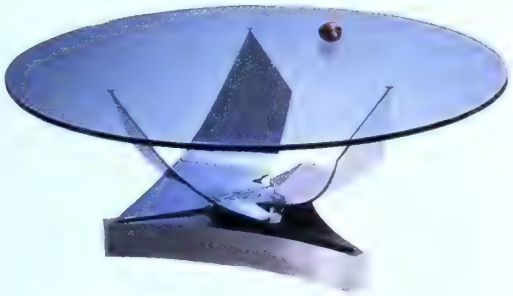


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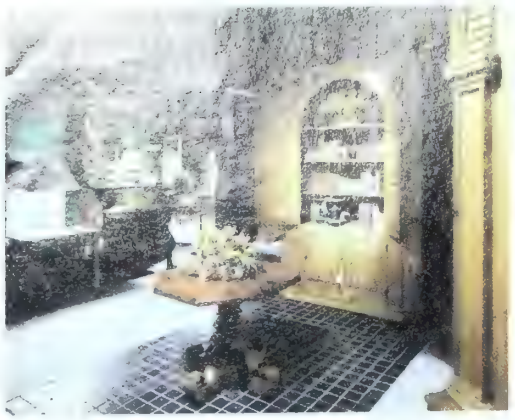
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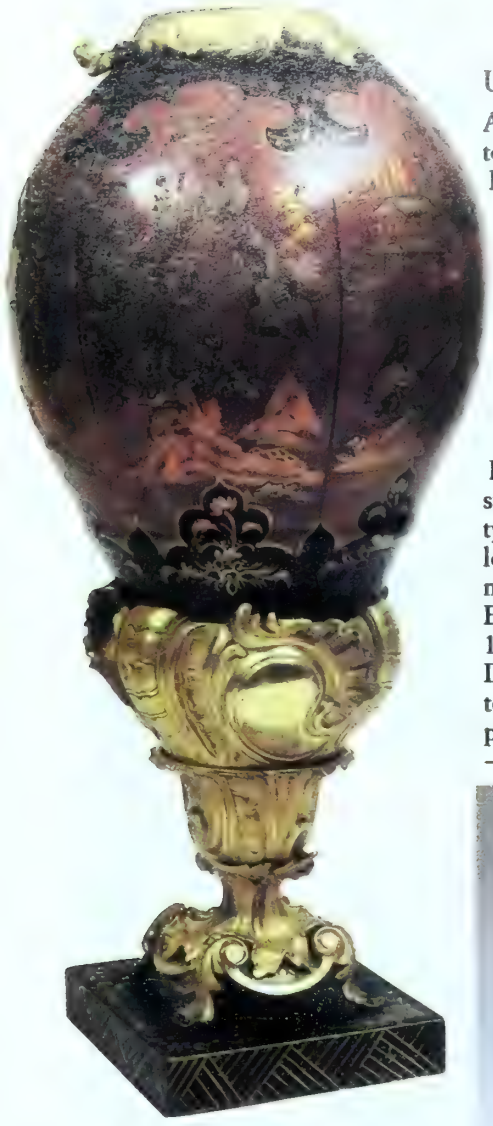
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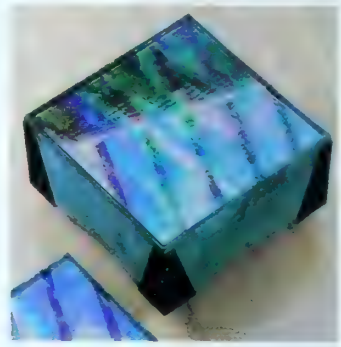
TOLE VASE RETURNS TO PARIS

This unusual French tole vase, *above,* possibly one of a kind, is decorated in the chinoiserie style. Produced for the European market in the late eighteenth century, it was poised on a Rococo gilt-bronze mount during the mid nineteenth century to create a grand vase almost three feet tall. The piece was discovered by Ariane Dandois in Copenhagen and can be seen at her stand at the thirteenth Biennale des Antiquaires held at the Grand Palais, Paris, September 25–October 12.

UNDERGROUND ART

Art posters to draw the crowds to various destinations on the London bus and subway lines were the heart of London Transport's design program. Launched in 1908, it commissioned posters from such artists as Graham Sutherland, Rex Whistler, Jean Dupas, McKnight Kauffer, and—in the 1921 rugby poster, *right*—Dame Laura Knight. Essential to the system's image is the familiar typeface of the Underground logo and the posters' place names: a plump sans-serif Edward Johnston design of 1915–17, which predates Art Deco by a decade. Now, thanks to Westminster Graphics, 24 poster designs from five decades are being reprinted for sale and are available in the United States. For a catalogue call 800-426-1776 or, in California, 619-295-8672.





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Architect Franklin D. Israel's richly patinated cocktail table, *above,* is a two-foot-square piece of handmade iridescent glass set into a copperplated steel base. The limited-edition table, which is set on casters, sells for about $2,500. On special order from Wilder Place, 7975½ Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. 90046.



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WRIGHT AGAIN

In 1913, Frank Lloyd Wright designed a delicate steel chair, *above,* for Chicago's ill-fated Midway Gardens cabaret, doomed by Prohibition. The chair will live again in the first group of seven Wright pieces made in Italy by Cassina under the sponsorship of the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation. Atelier International will launch U.S. distribution this October. Available through designers.

DESIGNER DEBUT IN CHINTZ

The launching of a new designer who has long been a collector of antique fabrics brings to the market a group of glazed chintzes available from Cowtan & Tout. The Fernanda Niven Collection consists of four patterns, each in five colorways, including Melizande, *below left,* based on an 1840 French fabric, and Ridgelyburn, *below right,* adapted from an 1850 English material.



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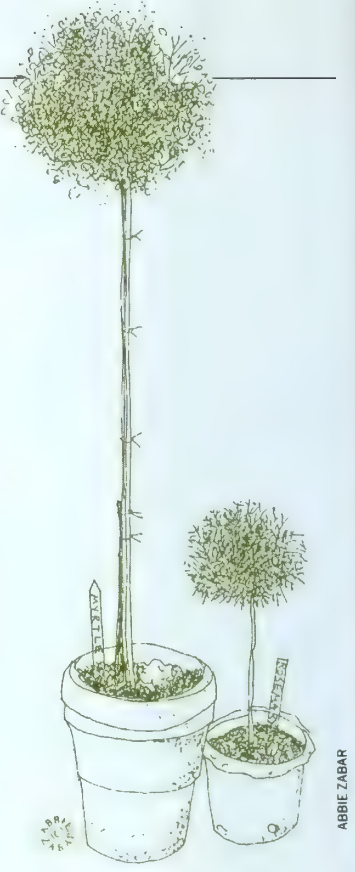


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CHRISTMAS BEGUILEMENTS

Bergdorf Goodman's tempting seventh-floor shops, dedicated to the house-proud and known collectively as The Home, will soon include a special holiday corner where potted topiaries (two examples, *right*) will be among the wares. Five plant types are expected—santolina, rosemary, myrtle, serissa, and leptospermum—and there will be double-ball shapes as well. Devotees of this beguiling form of living decoration use them on tables, stands, floors—wherever flowers might go. And they make a perfect, lasting gift for the green of thumb. Bergdorf Goodman, New York.



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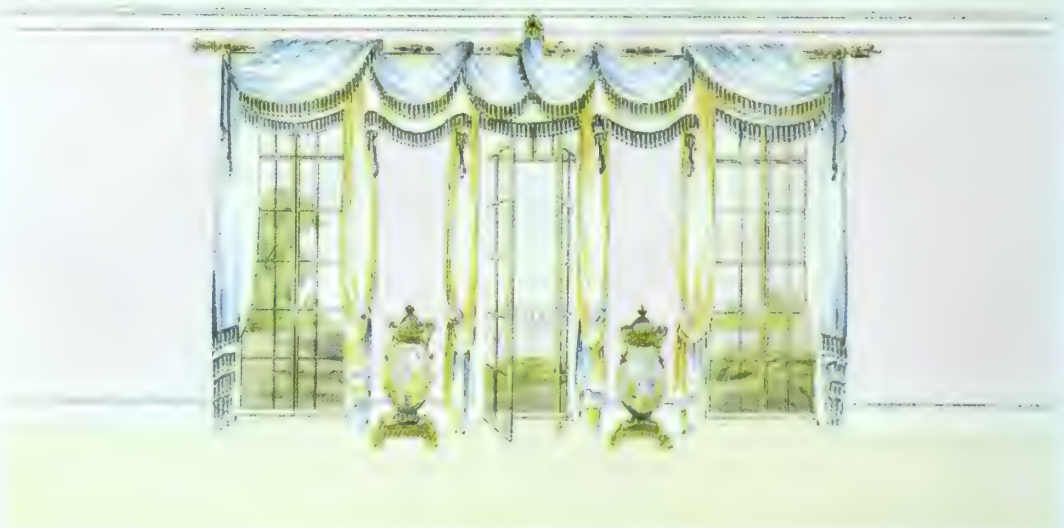
DELANY FLOWER PLATES

The dramatic coal black flower-decorated dessert plates, *below*, just introduced at Tiffany's, owe their existence to two talented women: Mary Granville Delany, eighteenth-century English botanical artist (House & Garden, September 1986), and Irish couturière and home-furnishings designer Sybil Connolly. Connolly translated Mrs. Delany's collages and equally beautiful embroideries on black silk into porcelain. Set of four eight-inch plates at $75; for information call 800-526-0649.

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A forgotten book of 1815 that Simon Jervis, Deputy Keeper of the Department of Furniture at the Victoria and Albert, recently rediscovered in the London museum's library is called *A Series of Designs for Interior Decorations Comprehending Draperies and Elegances for the Drawing Room*. Consisting of eighteen window-curtain patterns by John Stafford (an example *above*), the volume, dedicated to Thomas Hope, also gives instructions for cutting and draping material and installing hardware. Mr. Jervis promises a reprint in a year or two.

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Boussac has also reproduced a series of new documentary designs, including Oreste, *above,* a cotton based on eighteenth-century prints from Musée Mulhouse. Boussac fabrics are available through designers in eighteen U.S. cities.



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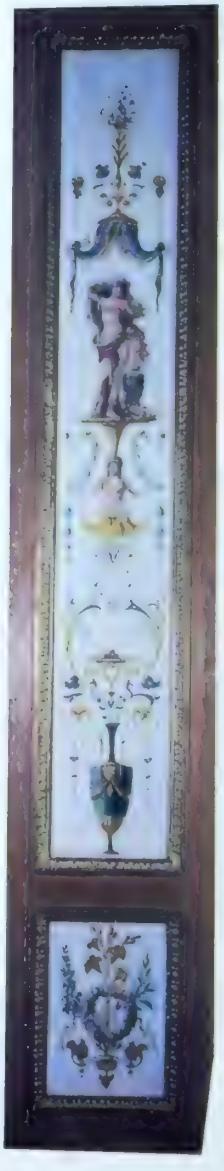
The Growth Accelerator, *bottom,* recently installed at the Missouri Botanical Garden in St. Louis, was designed by Michael Jantzen to hasten plant propagation while conserving energy. Its conveyor system transports plants between two chambers, offering artificial light, sunlight, *below,* or darkness; insulation or exposure; and controlled temperatures. Connecting the chambers: a small room for hand tending. A computer control system is being developed. Although the Growth Accelerator is not yet available for consumers, you can write for more information to Michael Jantzen, Guarantee Industrial Systems, 3445 Bent Ave., St. Louis, Mo. 63116-2699.

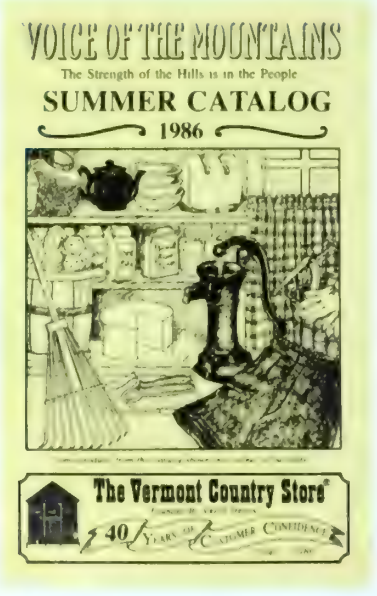




LOUIS XVI PANELING

Decorative panels, *below right,* designed as an ensemble for what was to become a Rothschild residence in the rue Saint-Florentin, are available through Stair Sainty Fine Art, New York. The panels are the work of Henri Salembier (1753–1820), an important French designer of the late eighteenth century. Many rooms of this style fell prey to changing fashion and few survive. These panels, all in perfect condition and offered as a group, remain set in the original Louis XVI oak with gilded mountings—elegant icons of a civilized age.





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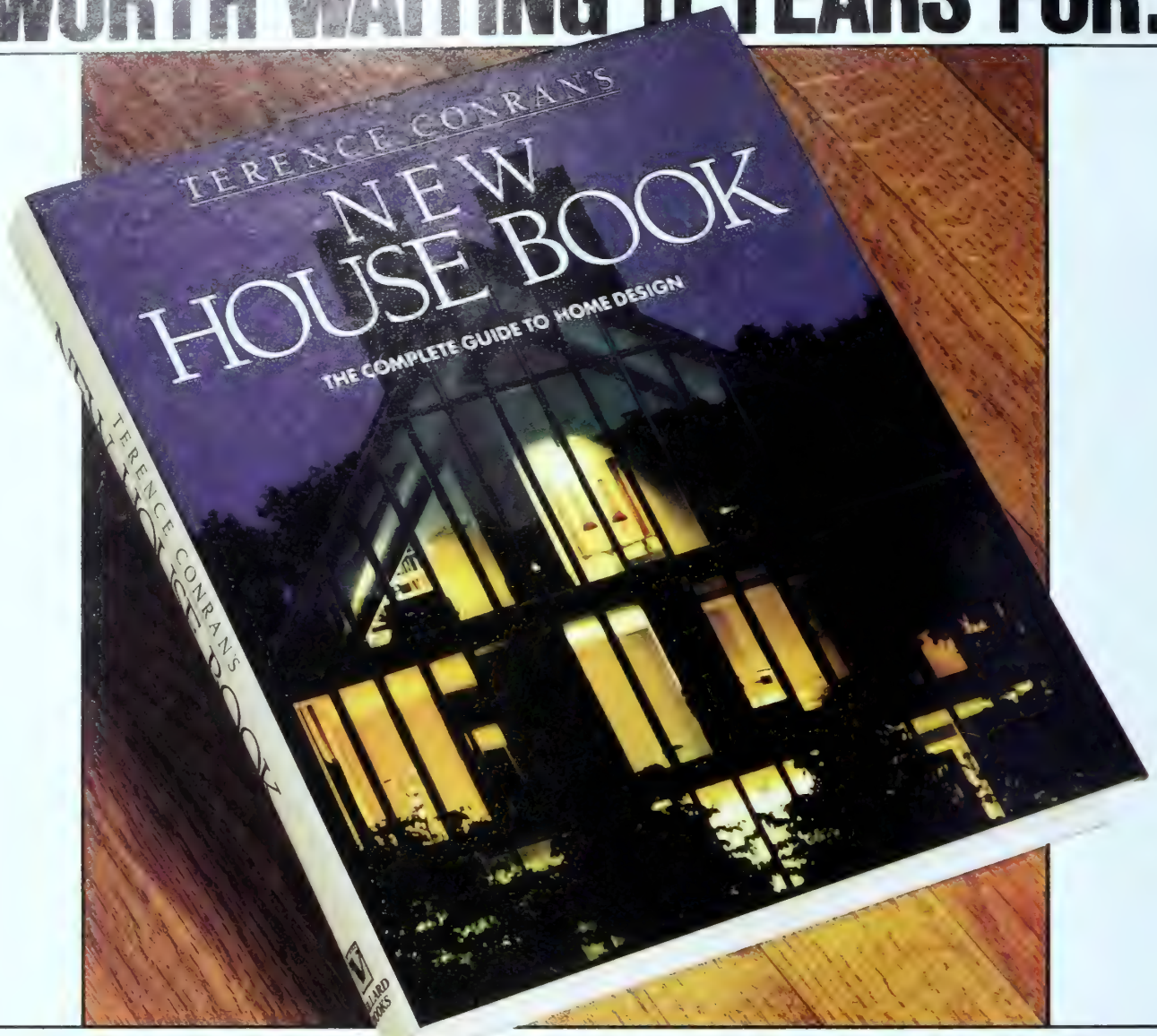
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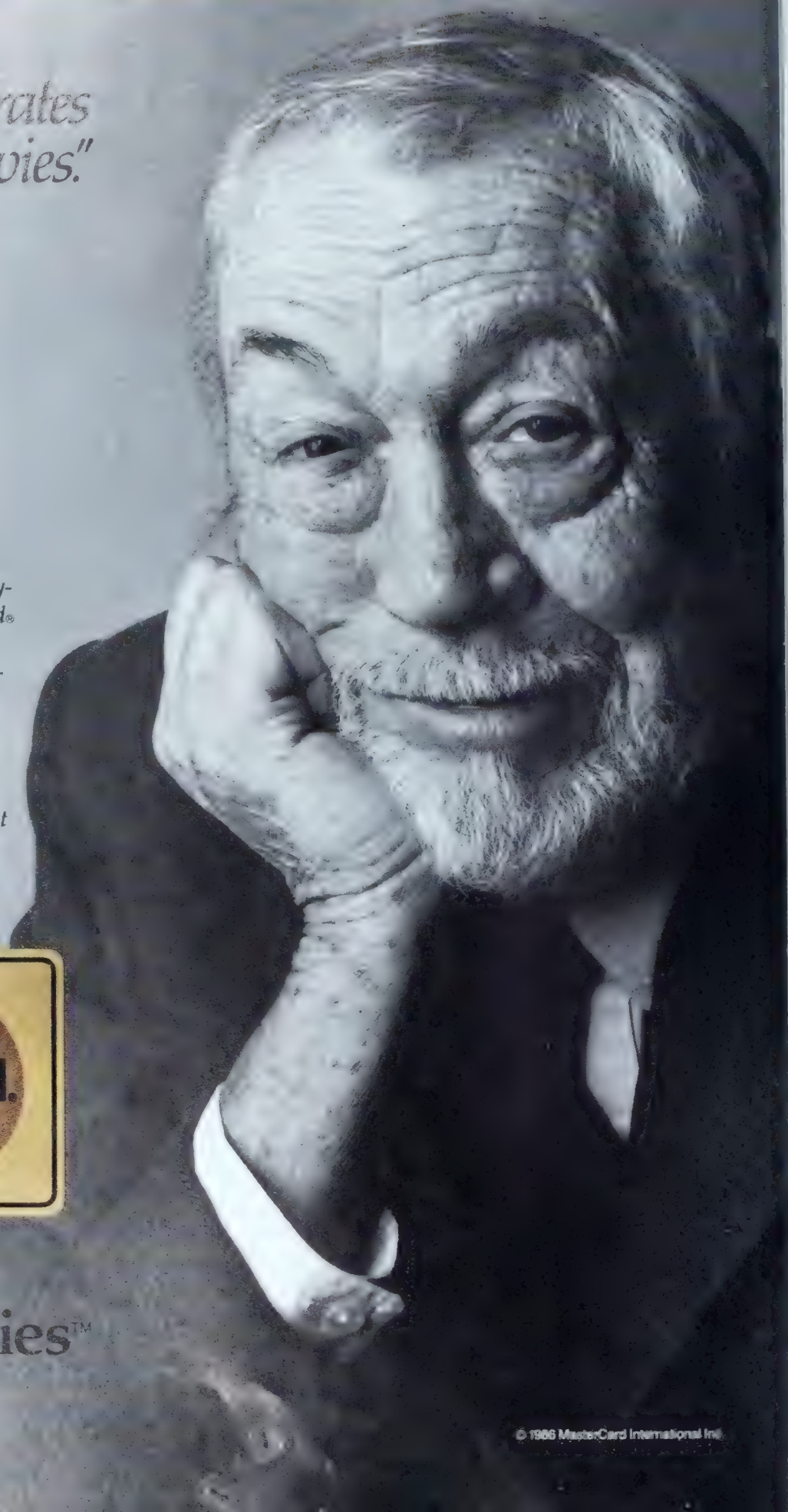

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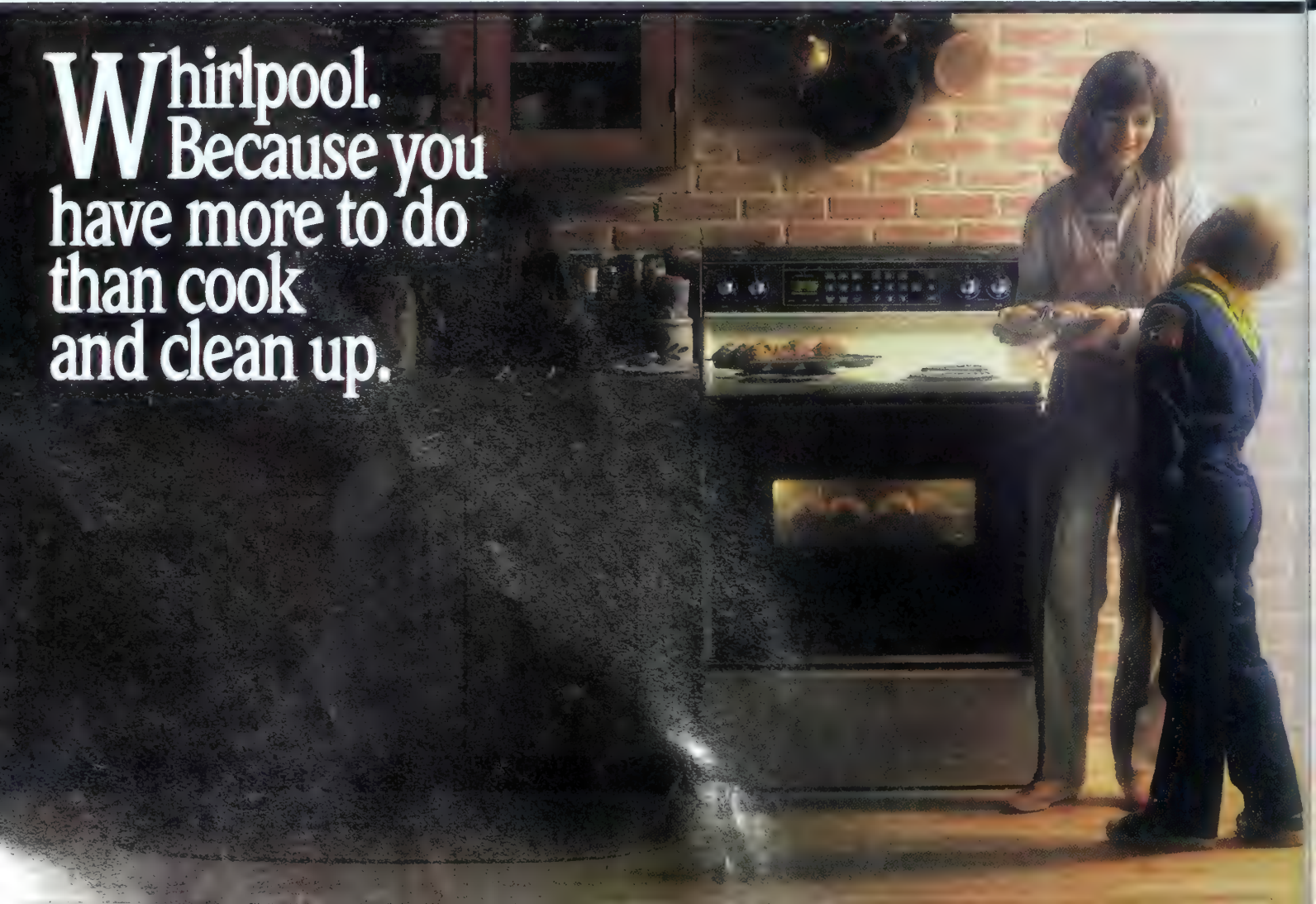
the first such adaptive reuse of a historic structure. His housing projects are among the finest examples of the use of common space. At the Oak Creek Apartments in Palo Alto, for instance, he buried parking garages beneath the structures and used their roofs as common gardens. His Embarcadero Plaza makes San Francisco's ugliest freeway look right. Even the downtown Bank of America Building owes its shape to Halprin's suggestion that it might resemble the wonderful intrusion of hexagonally cracked rock in the Sierras called the Devil's Postpile.

You can hardly look at the Bay Area without seeing Halprin, but the place has had as much influence on him as he on it. Many decades before, the Berkeley-trained philosopher Josiah Royce had written, "The better aspect of our provincialism is always the longing for the improvement of the community." Like his wife—who transformed her orthodox modern-dance training into new means for exploring the boundary between dance and the movement of daily life—Halprin transformed the Modernism he had imbibed from Gropius, Christopher Tunnard, and Thomas Church into means for making people more aware of their environment. Every buzzword the Bay Area has spawned—*awareness, nature, ecology, Experience* with a capital *E*—has found a loving home in the Halprins' hearts.

Los Angeles architect Frank Gehry designed the San Francisco exhibit. When he agreed to do it, he told Halprin, "Retrospectives are for dead people, Larry. Let's do what you're interested in *now*." As a result, the oldest project in it is the Sea Ranch of 1962, and it focuses on the grandest plans, a third of which have never been built. The show is the first one-man architecture exhibit for the museum's new Department of Architecture and Design, so one would think they might have objected to such a cavalier treatment of a career. It's lucky they didn't.

A prospective, not a retrospective, the show is an intimate and visually astonishing look at the design process of a man who believes above all in process and experience. For three decades, Halprin has worked largely on the basis of notebooks, where he records everything from travel sketches to project ideas to menus and reminders. "I carry a notebook all the time," he said, "even in bed." He may photocopy a watercolor from the notebook, enlarge it, repaint it, enlarge it again, draw more, cut the enlargement into a 3-D shadow box, or use it as the basis for a series of rough models. Each has a visual interest of its own. "My end product is whatever I'm working on right then," he said, "whether it's a sketch, a model, or a working fountain." The show contains all these painterly meditations together with photographs, finished models, large-scale working mock-ups of water features, and a two-story installation for the museum's rotunda, showing the transformations of urban space he has planned or executed in Portland, Jerusalem, and Los Angeles.

It takes guts to lay out your cher-



ished ideas, though with many architects, it wouldn't matter. Whatever their ideas, you still end up with a building like a stack of cafeteria trays. Halprin brings theory into play with unusual directness, particularly his notion about the experience of nature. He thinks that it is good for us city dwellers, that it brings us into contact with ecology and natural law. So the exhibit is full of water and rock: in working fountains, in the banner (enlarged from a notebook) that shows the course of a stream from mountain to sea, in the studies of the Sea Ranch surf, in the meadow stream and the fountain that springs from a huge block of granite at Levi's Plaza, and in two great fountains at Portland. Even for New York City, where he planned a never-built sports park for the reuse of the World's Fair site, he included, among facilities for everything from billiards to tennis, a mountain for rock climbing.

All of this is a mistake. Especially on the Pacific Rim, the nature that surrounds cities is already a more powerful presence than anyone could design. Anyway, a man who plants one million trees—as Halprin did at Sea Ranch—or runs an urban waterfall on a 300,000-gallon-per-minute pump or builds preferentially in concrete because "it wears beautifully like the travertine marble of Rome" is hardly an ecological designer. If this be ecology, then so is Versailles. But Halprin's mistake is like San Francisco. A city of hills and valleys, it was nonetheless laid out on the standard rectilinear grid, a living contradiction between man and nature. Still, on a sunny day, it is the Emerald City. The pleasure comes from the contradiction, just as it so often does in Halprin.

When I was last in Portland, I visited his network of downtown parks: the Lovejoy Fountain, which resembles a contour map; the tree-lined tumuli of quiet Pettigrove Park; and the urban cataract that stands before the Civic Auditorium. In the garden of modern architecture that Portland has become, the first one I could find was the auditorium fountain. It was a block-wide array of irregular truncated pyramids made of scored and pebbled concrete with stairs like fish ladders framing it . . . and it was off. I was just turning away when the thing exploded. Water roared, gushed, plummeted, shot, and scintillated in thin sheets over the pebbled aggregate. I walked down onto the square pavers in the pool at the base, around and behind a waterfall, up to the top of the fountain where water ran more quietly through sloping streams to the falls and welled out of the hollow pyramids. As I stood at the top, my legs communicated to me a muscular tension exactly like the feel of standing atop Nevada Falls in Yosemite, the rock tilting slightly down. I was in two places at once.

The experience of nature is an excuse for Halprin to play with the nature of experience. His most persuasive ideas are about the design of experience through movement. The design for the Holocaust Memorial in San

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GARDEN PLEASURES

Francisco—a competition Halprin lost—is a fine example. It sinks into the earth in a descending spiral that narrows and steepens as the visitor goes down. In the navel is a bronze plate, by Robert Graham, out of which shaven heads are straining. Beyond it, a tunnel leads out to a view of the bay.

Networks of space that thread through cities extend the idea of exploratory movement. At Bunker Hill in Los Angeles, his fountain and water steps will lead down to pedestrian malls that connect with the spaces he is planning for the recycling of Olympic Park. For the FDR Memorial in Washington, D.C., he has fit into an existing network of monuments, providing for this President who was more heard than seen, a succession of stone-and-water garden rooms, each annotated to represent a decade of his career. The Portland network is his most complete to date, embracing parks, streets, and walkways. When he and Charles Moore lost a competition to build Pioneer Courthouse Square, they lost the chance to run the network from the heart of downtown to its periphery. Instead, the city chose a Post-Modern square whose worst feature is a fountain done in purple-and-periwinkle bathroom tile that is as narrow and static a parody as Halprin's fountains are pleasurable and inviting ironies.

Some say Halprin represents the flower-power sixties, but he has done more to introduce complexity into the urban scene than have most Post-Modernists. In 1967, he wrote the report *New York, New York,* a much-praised but little-used study. Two decades later, a high- and mid-rise apartment block with its interior courtyard devoted to community gardening is going up exactly as Halprin envisioned and exactly where he suggested. Elements of his 1973 plan for Morningside Park on the edge of Harlem—the outcome of a workshop held with neighborhood participants—are likely to be included in the actual redevelopment beginning soon. New York is often called the last city of Europe. Halprin has made space everywhere, and it now seems likely he will make it even there. His best things are invitations to the dance of daily life, reminiscent of the welcoming phrase with which he punctuates his conversation: "Are you getting it?" He really wants to know. □


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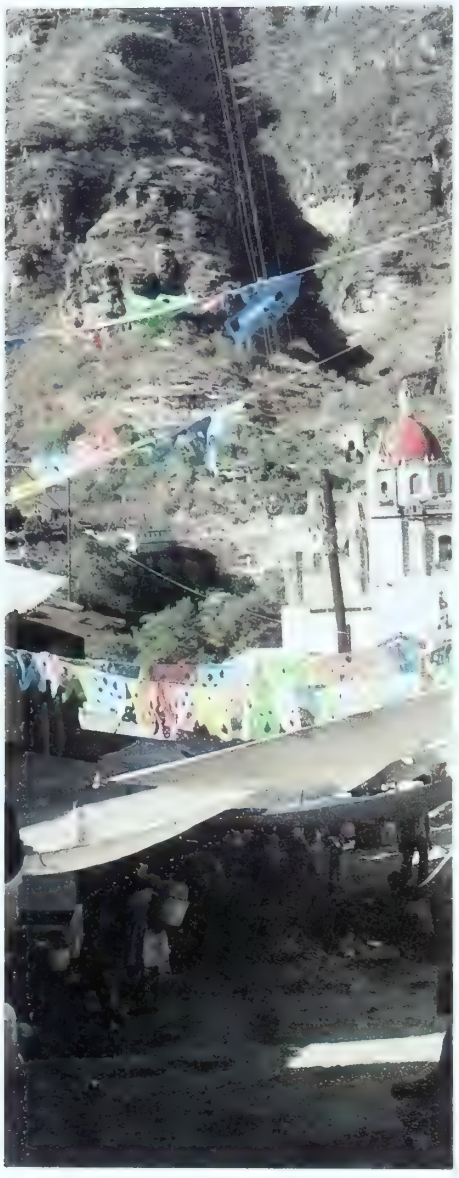
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PLACE OF THE CAVES

A pilgrimage to Chalma brings a surprising vision of paradise

By Roxana Robinson





Nestled in a narrow valley, the Mexican pilgrimage church of Chalma, *left*, has a soaring gold-and-white interior, *above*. *Below:* Women gather to collect holy water from the fountain in a courtyard beside the church.

Chalma is only about fifty miles southwest of Mexico City, so it's easy to get there by car, and you can even go by a big beat-up silver bus if you want. But the way you ought to go to Chalma is on foot, and you aren't meant to amble along the road either. You're supposed to struggle through the steep wooded mountains that surround this tiny hamlet, the holiest shrine in Mexico.

Chalma is a very old pilgrimage village, holy long before the Spaniards and Christianity arrived. The word *chalma* means "place of the caves" in the Nahuatl language. The caves were presided over by Ostotocotl, an Aztec god of great potency until the Augustinian priests appeared about 1535. They smashed Ostotocotl's statue on the rocks below the caves, announced that Christ himself had appeared there, declared the place a Christian shrine, and built a large church. The holiness of the place remained undiminished by this sudden transformation, and everything about Chalma is still considered sacred: air, earth, and water.

The continuing intensity is what is compelling about the place. Unlike the solemn temples of Teotihuacán and Malinalco, empty and abandoned for four hundred years, Chalma's strength and mystery are unabated. It survived the dramatic shift from Aztec to Christian religion, and it has so far resisted the subtler erosions of the twentieth century. Its traditions—and these are numerous — continue, too ancient, mild, and ingenuous to provoke dissent. Part of its secret lies in its guilelessness and modesty: no one promotes it. Guidebooks are condescending or dismissive, the church is deemed uninteresting, and the pilgrims are ignored. Educated Mexicans are reluctant to discuss it: it seems to them so obvious, so undistinguished. They offer instead the great ruins at Oaxaca and Chichén Itzá. Still, most of them have been to Chalma themselves.

My friend Jim and I were staying in



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Cuernavaca when we heard about Chalma. It seemed like a good place for us to go: Jim is an architect, and his interest is spaces and how they affect people. This overlaps neatly with my interest, which is people and how they affect other people. I especially liked all the customs associated with the pilgrimage to Chalma, and we decided we would follow them carefully and make the trip the way thousands of Mexicans do each year.

The walk through the mountains from Cuernavaca takes about eight hours. The people we talked to had done it at night, arriving in Chalma at dawn, exhausted, exhilarated, and filthy. It sounded wonderful to us, but the thought of having done it sounded more wonderful than actually doing it. And in any case, Jim and I are gringos. We thought we'd face right up to that, and drive. Everything else, though, we'd do by the book.

We left Cuernavaca in the early morning. It is a noisy, diesel-rank town, but once we had climbed up onto the long *barranca* that leads to the mountains above it, the air turned sweet and silent, and the views expansive. We took a narrow dirt road that climbed through the mountains, hugging their steep sides. There were no guardrails, and on the bad curves there were always crosses, hung with faded flowers and fraying ribbons.

After an hour in the high woods, the road began to descend, and the landscape open up. Before we could see the village, we saw the crosses studding the high bluffs. The Christ of Chalma—El Santo Niño or El Santito—is known for miracles. A pilgrim who asks for one promises to erect a white wooden cross up on the heights above the village if the request is granted. There are crosses everywhere, shining against the high rust-colored slopes.

The village itself is tiny, set in the hollow of the hills, and the church is tucked down in a wrinkle of the land. From a distance you see nothing but a small adobe village, sleepy and dusty.

We came to Chalma from the north, and so our first stop was at Ahuehuete at the tree where the Chalma River begins as a spring. Here we stopped to wash (though we were not appropriately covered with grime from an all-night hike), scooping water from a mossy keg and splashing it on our faces. We turned next to the row of tin-roofed stalls across the road where women stood over steaming pots of food. After you have washed, you are to "take a little something." Jim and I shared a tortilla wrapped around something dense and rich and hot. The women watched us, their faces dark in the dim low booths. Jim and I are visibly gringos, and although our looks were foreign to them, it was rather nice to think that our actions were not. What we were doing had been done daily by Mexicans for hundreds and hundreds of years.



Jubilant bathers crowd the banks of the shallow Chalma River behind the church.

On feast days violinists come to play at the roadside at Ahuehuete. This was just an ordinary day, so the music came from a tinny speaker, plaintive and sentimental. After you have taken a little something, you dance. Jim and I took ceremonial hold of each other and stepped solemnly in elegant patterns through the dirt.

When we separated, the women with the coronas were at once upon us. The coronas are made from fresh flowers, and the women carry them stacked on their arms, like huge leafy bangles. They are the pilgrim's badges. We bought three, at fifty centavos each: one for me, one for Jim, and one for the car. Mine was of light and dark pink bougainvillea, and the others were of pale yellow lilies and lacy ferns. The one for the car is a vestige of earlier days; a horse, or even a burro, would look very fine with a corona over his ears, tossing his head beneath ferns and lilies. Our little red Volkswagen Rabbit looked sporty but somehow peculiar, with the wreath loosely off-center over the antenna.

In the center of the village there is a dusty lot on the valley side of the street. It was half-filled with battered pickups, low-slung cars, and a bus or two. We left our car, coronas still on, and crossed the road toward the church. The route is unmistakable—a wide pedestrian walkway, hung with banners and merchandise and lined with stalls. It looks like any market, except that the people walking through it are all going in one direction and they are all wearing coronas. Everything a pilgrim could want is on offer: food in intricate patterns on big iron platters, woven sandals, pictures of El Santito, hand-knitted sweaters, crucifixes and mourning dolls, rows of neatly piled vegetables, crumbly chunks of pale earth. These last were marked *Tierrita santa, para comer:* "Holy earth, to eat." I asked the woman selling it what it should be eaten for. She looked impatient. Whatever ails you, she said.

You travel blind toward the church.

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We entered a big square courtyard through an iron gateway. An old man sat just inside, beating steadily on a small drum, his hat hopefully open on the sidewalk. The rising hillside to the right has been burrowed into like a hive, and it is filled with rooms to rent, like an apartment mountain. People stood quietly along the railings above us, leaning over the courtyard, breathing in the air, basking in the village itself. Beneath the rows of rooms was an iron pipe, with water flowing from it into a big stone basin. People stood around this, filling plastic jugs and buckets.

A small family appeared in the gateway, young, urban, well dressed. At the edge of the stone courtyard the young wife gave her handbag to her husband. She then took his other hand and her child's hand and lowered herself to her knees. The three of them moved slowly over the paving stones, the walkers keeping the slow pace with the woman's laborious progress toward the church.

The façade of the church is unimpressive; you can't really blame the guidebooks for turning up noses at it. It is ordinary sixteenth-century colonial stuff: a square tower on either side of a blank gray stone façade, a small plain doorway in the center, all topped with the low red dome. But the big courtyard declares a sense of arrival. And the old man's steady insistent beat, the theatrical open space, the loose crowds of crowned people, and the singularity of intent—all create a sense of increasing excitement. It is like the first act of an opera.

At the front door of the church there is a smooth wooden pole. You are to slip your corona over it before entering, a reminder just before you step inside that this is no ordinary church. Still I was unprepared. I expected something like the exterior, not this high exultation of gleaming white columns, soaring arches and rising windows, all edged narrowly and impeccably in gold. The interior is immense, vast and mysterious spaces overhead, with all surfaces immaculately clean and shimmering in the subdued light.

There is a mass said in the church at Chalma every half hour every day of the year. This, as well as the fact that it is Mexico, means that the congregation drifts in irregularly, in an erratic stream. The mass, because of this, provides a comforting, continual undertone rather than an overpowering thunder, a steady presence rather than a climactic conclusion. The pews were all filled; there might have been three hundred people in them. Many were old people from the countryside, and the old women covered their heads with their *rebozos*. A group of farmers, wearing worn brown pants and soft white shirts and carrying huge sacks of grain on their backs, shouldered past us. They had come in to have their harvest blessed. Near us a group of teenage girls squatted by the wall, a transistor radio at their feet playing quiet rock music. The inevitable brown dog trotted up a side aisle.

High above the altar is a statue of El Santito on the cross. The priest was moving beneath this, speaking in a low, comforting voice into a microphone. Ragged groups of people moved toward the altar for communion. Jim and I stayed at the back of the church and waited to leave with the crowd. No one left through the front door; everyone drifted unevenly through the big side door on the right, into a dim corridor. Following them, I was disappointed: all those preparations, all that anticipation, leaking away in this vague and murmurous process?

We found ourselves in a gloomy hallway with a vaulted ceiling. A line of people slowly mounted a stairway to the left. I felt I must join them; Jim felt he must not. I stood crammed between pilgrims, mounting a narrow staircase step by step. I found myself at last above the altar and behind the statue of El Santito. We were to kiss the glass panel that separated us from El Santito's robe. On either side of the panel was a wooden box with a slot in it, for coins. The coins fell deep

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into the interior of the church, bouncing and sliding against unseen wooden passageways.

Descending the staircase on the other side, I entered into a series of ambiguous rooms: confessions were being heard, pilgrims were milling about, rosaries were being sold. The rooms were high and dark and uncomforting. I found Jim, and we went on, passing cells opening onto an interior courtyard, where old people were living, quarters even holier than the *dormitorios* on the hillside. Some people were stretched out on the stones on their blankets; some crouched over battered metal cookstoves.

Down more corridors, past vast gloomy paintings, we came suddenly to a brilliant pagan scene: a shining white courtyard, edged by Moorish arches, the walls vivid in the violent sunlight, and in the center a fountain, high and energetic. Around it stood women in long skirts and shawls, talking to one another, dipping buckets and jugs into the water, filling bottles and vials with the mystical liquid. In the church, though we were foreigners, we were legitimate members of the congregation; here we were clearly aliens. We carried away cameras, not jugs. Suddenly feeling like outsiders, we moved back beneath the shadows of the archways and then down more corridors. But they were becoming lighter: as Jim pointed out, the architecture was stating a progression. After the dim ecclesiastical spaces, the silences and restrictions of the church, we were moving toward openness and light: the vivid deep blue sky above the courtyard, the brilliant white walls were promises. The next corridor we took opened up to the hills. One side of it was another row of arches, an unexpected expansion into light, heights, and freedom.

Jim reached the end of the corridor first, where a stone archway led beyond. He stopped, turned to me, and smiled. When I caught up, I could see why: beyond was paradise.

Upstream from the small stone bridge on which we stood and to the right were huge trees, their vast green canopies arching over the glittering water of the shallow Chalma River. People sat on the pink rocks at the edge, and bright clothes were spread on the grass and hung on trees. Downstream, at the base of the towering church walls, the water was filled with people: small naked children, clambering cheerily through the bright water; old women in flesh-colored undershirts, their hair in lank streaks down their broad backs; old men, their hats still primly on, perched on rocks in midstream. It was a mosaic of motion and color, shimmer and gesture and talk. Jubilation was the mood.

Jim and I stood silent on the narrow stone bridge, the mountains rising above us, the deep blue of the Mexican sky overhead. No one had told us about this part, and I was glad. It is better not to expect paradise: you risk disappointment. Ignorant, unsuspecting, washed, fed, danced, and crowned—when at last you see it, you will know it at once. □

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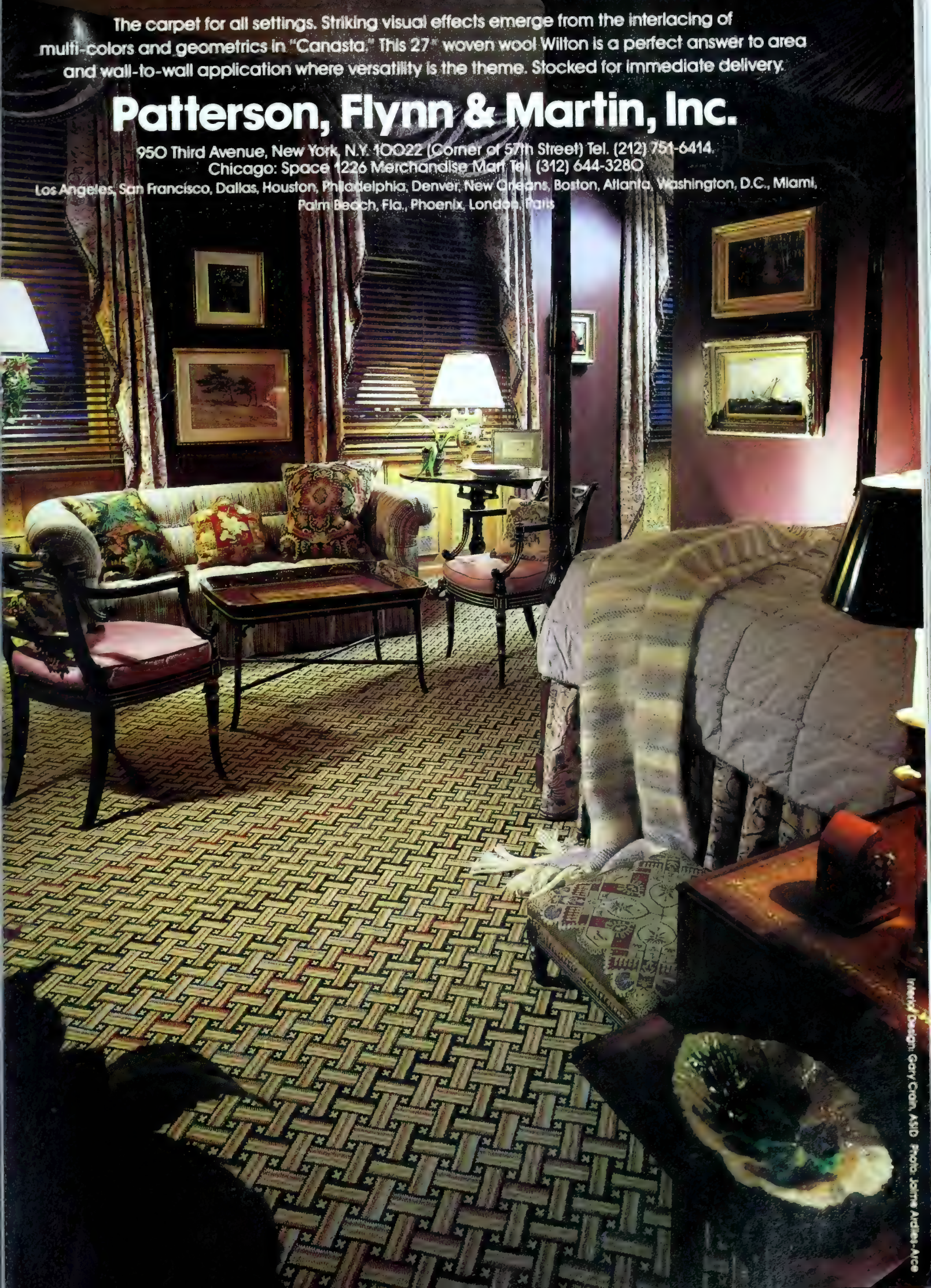
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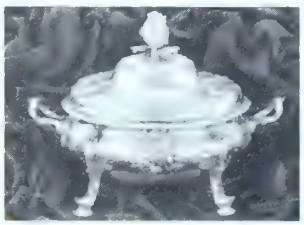
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JOURNAL

On the arts scene





EASTERN BLOCKS

One Hundred Views of Edo. *by Ando Hiroshige; Braziller, $75.*

Like Renaissance Florence or the Impressionists' Paris, Edo (Toyko) in the age of *ukiyo-e* epitomizes the culture of a people. In turns striking and subtle, the 119 woodblock land- and cityscapes of Hiroshige (1797–1858), *left* and *below,* are among the greatest achievements of Japanese art. Embracing all aspects of the city—from the manic Kabuki to the serenity of a teahouse—this master printmaker cherished the everyday, rendering exquisite visual anecdotes to produce an eternal portrait of a land in all seasons. *David Lisi*



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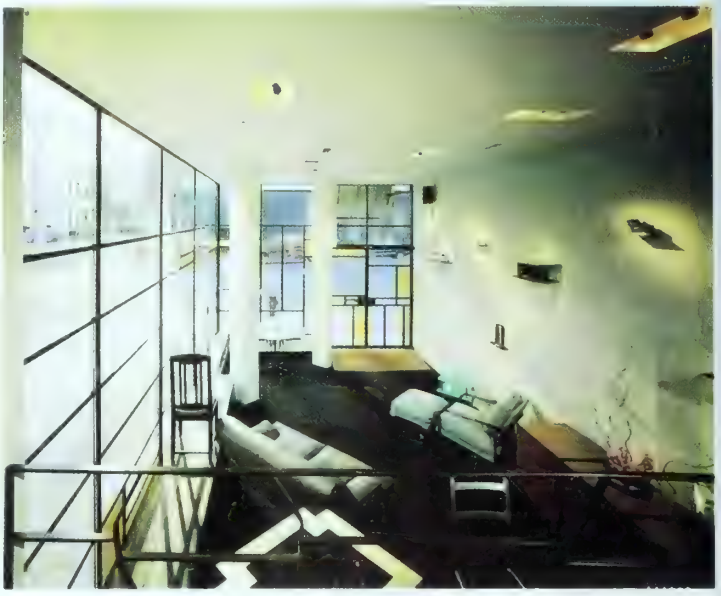
The Story of English: *In nine parts beginning September 15 on PBS.*

With the expert guidance of host Robert MacNeil, *below,* today's universal language is dissected into its many varieties, running the gamut from Chaucer to Valley Girls, from its Anglo-Saxon roots to the present day. Each hour-long segment of the series is fast-paced and filled with amazing facts. Did you know, for example, that half the world's telephones ring in English-speaking countries?

Gabrielle Winkel



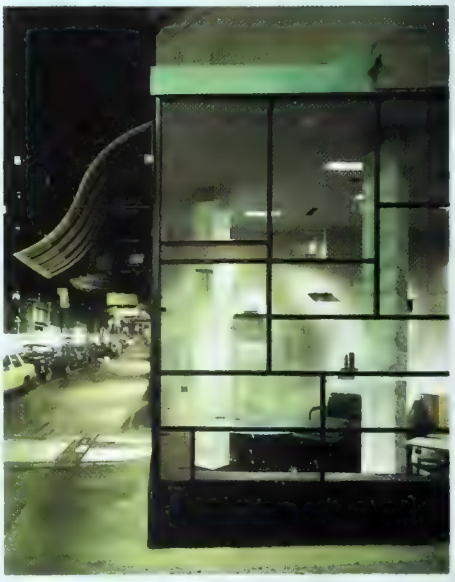
DAVID SOUTH



PACE SETTING

Directly across the street from the Anglophilic trappings of Ralph Lauren's new emporium at 72nd and Madison in New York sits a tiny luminous space devoted to a lyrically updated brand of early Modernism. Here crisp, linear steel window frames and stair rails contrast sharply with the taut planes of amber and clear glass and tinted plaster walls. In this shop virtually turned into shop window, the Pace Collection, a to-the-trade furniture company, has staked out an outpost just to tantalize the public. Thanks to architect Stephen Holl (whose forays into furniture design have included his 1984 Linear Chair for Pace), there is small chance that the Pace Collection's newest wares will go unnoticed.

Suzanne Stephens





PAUL WARCHOL

Top to bottom: shop interior; entrance canopy; and structural column.

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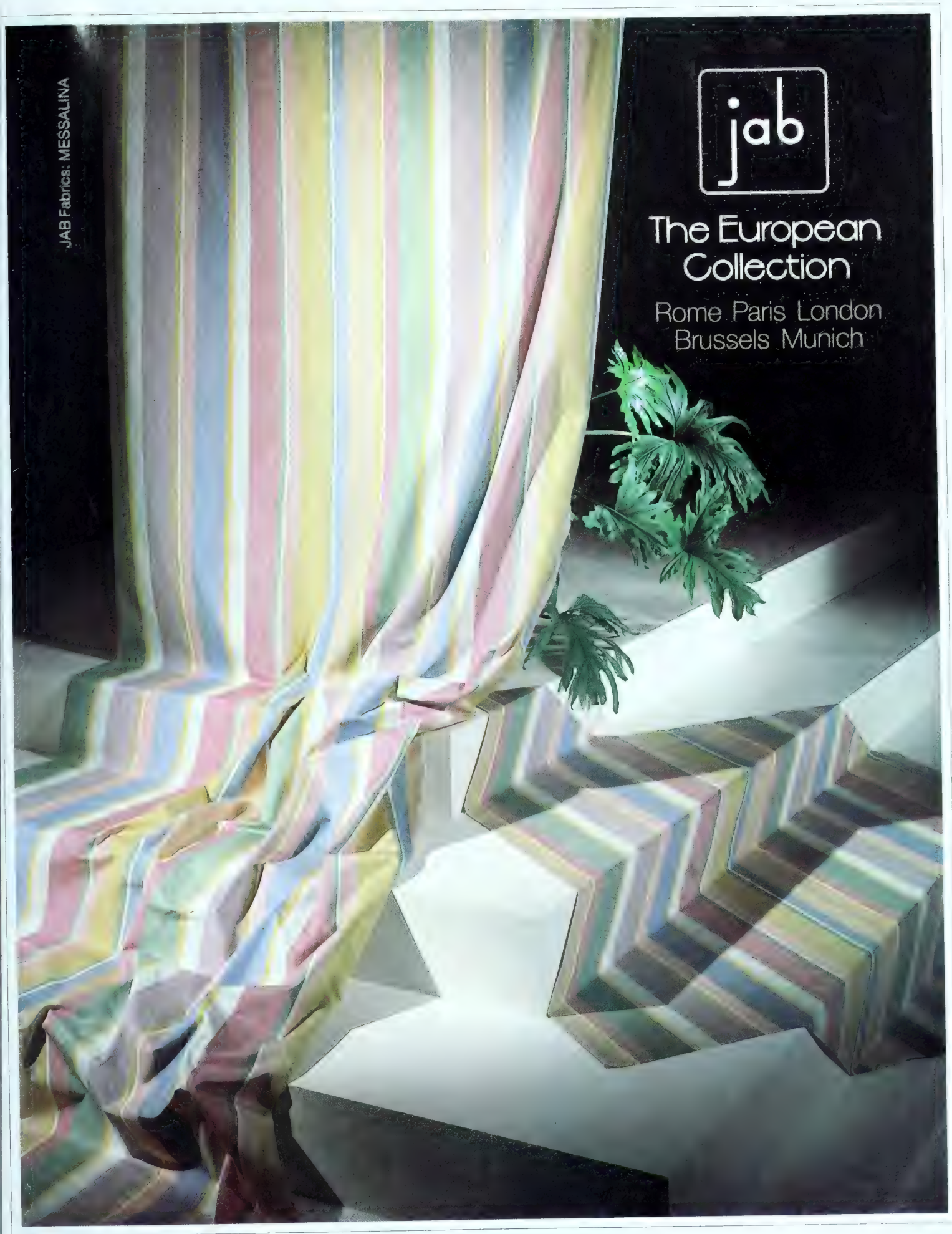
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AUTO AUTHORITY

Ghislain Mahy started restoring old cars for love and ended up with the world's largest automobile collection

By Richard Taylor-Constantine





Above: The Belgian car collector Ghislain Mahy, owner of nearly nine hundred antique automobiles. *Left* and *below:* To house his growing collection, Mahy bought the cavernous Ghent Circus in 1949.

Just over a hundred years ago, Carl Benz drove the first successful *Motorwagen* around his Mannheim neighborhood, thus beginning—for better or worse—the Century of the Automobile. Because of this anniversary, interest in antique-automobile collecting is higher than ever. And so are prices. A 1931 Bugatti Royale, one of just six in the world, was recently sold for $6.5 million, by far the highest price ever paid for a four-wheeled objet d'art.

Most automobile collectors own one or two old cars that have some special meaning for them. Zealots might amass a dozen machines, but the logistics—not to mention the cost—of storing, maintaining, and repairing a fleet of valuable automobiles are prodigious. Still, major private collections of a hundred cars or more dot the globe.

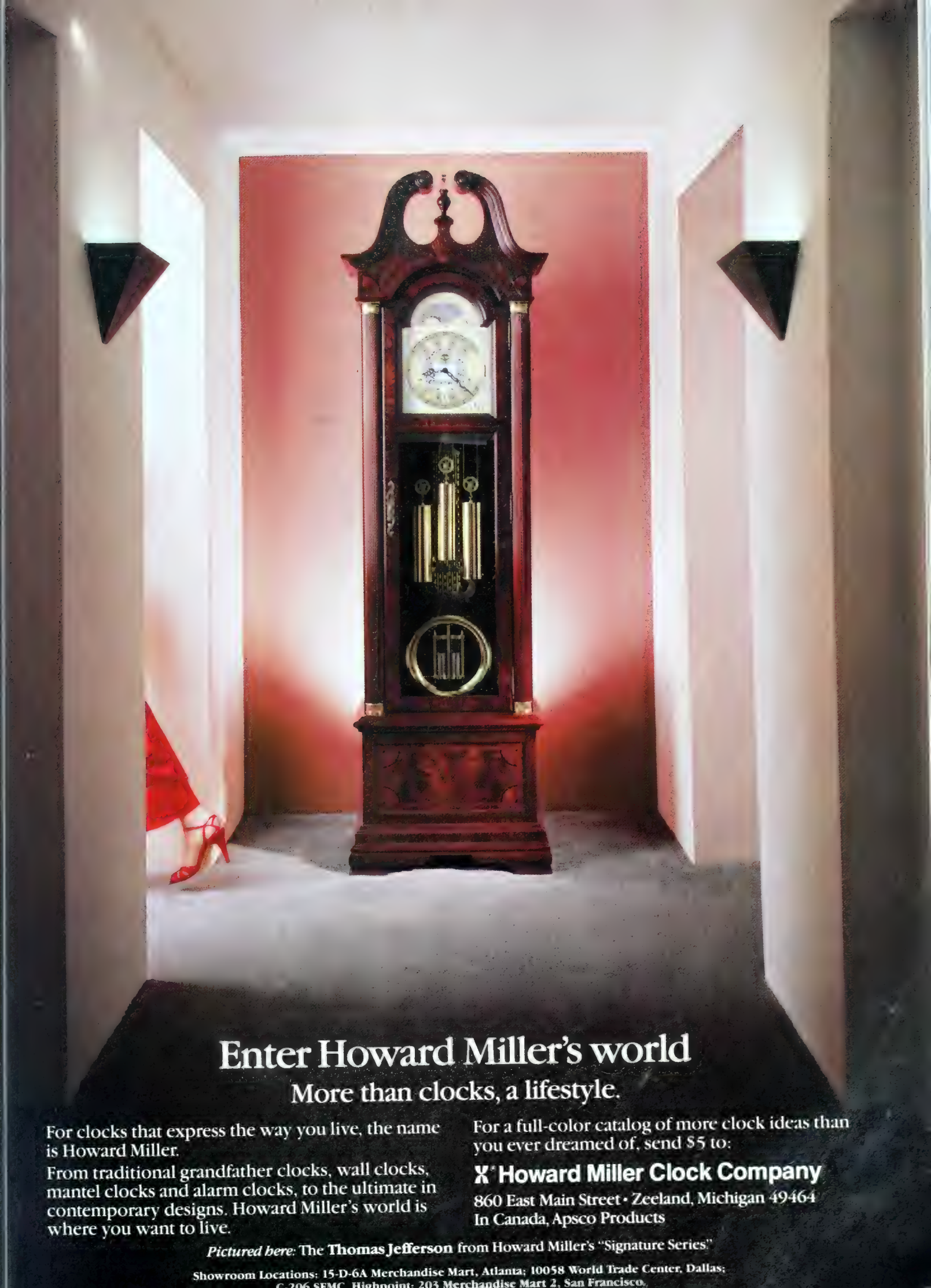
For tax reasons, most of these substantial private collections have been turned into museums, where the public can ogle the cars of their parents and grandparents. Jack Nethercutt's Merle Norman Collection in Sylmar, California, Briggs Cunningham's Auto Museum in Costa Mesa, the Imperial Palace Collection in Las Vegas, the Frederick C. Crawford Auto-Aviation Museum in Cleveland, and the Henry Ford collection at Greenfield Village are among the American collections one can visit.



Then there are the obsessed, the cost-is-no-object collectors who will sacrifice everything for the sake of adding yet another old car to the hundreds they already own. Fortunately most of these gargantuan collections—Lord Montague's collection at Beaulieu, the Schlumpf collection in Mulhouse, the Museo Carlo Biscaretti in Turin—have been recognized as national treasures.

With one unfortunate exception. The largest group of old cars ever assembled belonged to William Fisk Harrah, the late owner of Harrah's casinos and hotels. At the time of his death in 1978, Harrah's Automobile Collection in Reno comprised nearly fifteen hundred vehicles. Lamentably the collection was sold along with the casinos and hotels to the company that owns Holiday Inns, which has auctioned off most of the cars. Thanks to a public outcry, about three hundred will be preserved in a new museum in Reno, but the sheer size, the undeniable *bulk,*

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of the collection has been lost.

This dispersion of Harrah's collection has focused attention on an obscure Belgian car collector, Ghislain Mahy, who now enjoys the honor of having the largest collection of antique automobiles in the world. Monsieur Mahy owns nearly nine hundred vehicles, a number that is constantly increasing as he seeks to "complete" his collection.

Ghislain Mahy is now eighty, and estate taxes will someday necessitate the breakup of his collection. To avoid this fate, Monsieur Mahy has created two museums. The Musée Provincial d'Automobiles d'Houthalen, administered by Mahy's son Ivan, houses about 150 cars at Kelchterhoef, near the Zolder Grand Prix circuit. More important is Monsieur Mahy's current project. He has donated five hundred completely restored automobiles to create a new museum, Automobile Centre Mondial, in Brussels. Wisely supported by the Belgian government, it is housed in the Palais Mondial, which boasts sixty thousand square feet of exhibit area.

Most of Monsieur Mahy's remaining hundreds of automobiles are in poor condition, rusting patiently at his headquarters in Ghent. The painstaking restoration process is supervised by *le patron* himself, just as it has been for forty years. There are currently six craftsmen at work in the brightly lit shop: two mechanics, two assistants, a carpenter, and a painter. They labor twelve hours a day, six days a week. All six work on a variety of projects simultaneously, jumping from one car to another as suits Monsieur Mahy, and they have been able to bring back to life an average of fifteen cars each year for the past four decades.

The shop itself is in the most curious building one can imagine. Built in 1923 as a permanent home for circus performers, it is a fireproof replica of a circus tent, a towering concrete-and-steel cylinder in which a spiral ramp has been inserted to hold hundreds of cars. Monsieur Mahy bought the war-damaged Ghent Circus in 1949 and modified it for his collection. Here he has been ever since, awash in a sea of musty old automobiles.

One restores old cars for love, not profit. During the twenties and thirties, Ghislain Mahy was a typical mechanic/dealer who repaired and sold used cars. But in the inflationary period after World War II he purchased three new car franchises and built an empire. In those halcyon days, Mahy dealerships handled nearly one-third of the total Belgian market. Today his sons Hans and Ivan run the family Renault and Honda dealerships as well as the museums.

Monsieur Mahy's first collector car was a Model T Ford, which he bought in 1944 and restored himself. Ever since, he has bought steadily and catholically cars from all countries and eras, of all sizes and descriptions. Not just whole cars, mind you, but assorted parts and, saddest of all, cars that would be whole except for a missing limb—a door, a fender, an engine impossible to locate.

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For the purposes of a museum, of course, such a variety of vehicles is just what is wanted to show the year-by-year development of the automobile, from the earliest horseless carriages to today's computer-controlled transportation modules. Carl Benz's 1886 tricycle was built mostly of wood, and arch-rival Gottlieb Daimler's first vehicle, built later the same year, was literally a carriage with the horse traces removed and an engine mounted under the seat.

Ghislain Mahy's collection doesn't go back that early; no one's does, since the original Benz and Daimler vehicles exist only as copies made decades later by Mercedes-Benz apprentices. But surely there are enough examples of nineteenth-century motoring among Monsieur Mahy's treasures. He owns a whole row of de Dion–Boutons, the earliest French *marque*. Even rarer are such forgotten fin-de-siècle makes as Cottereau, Chenard Walcker, Darracq, FN, and Panhard Levassor.

Naturally Monsieur Mahy has restored a number of Belgian-made Minervas, as well as early examples from nearly every current European manufacturer: Fiat, Renault, Citroën, Peugeot, and the rest. Surprisingly for a collection housed in Europe, there is also a great number of British and American cars—Bentleys, Rolls-Royces, Packards, Oldsmobiles, Buicks, Chevrolets, Cadillacs, and nearly two dozen Fords.

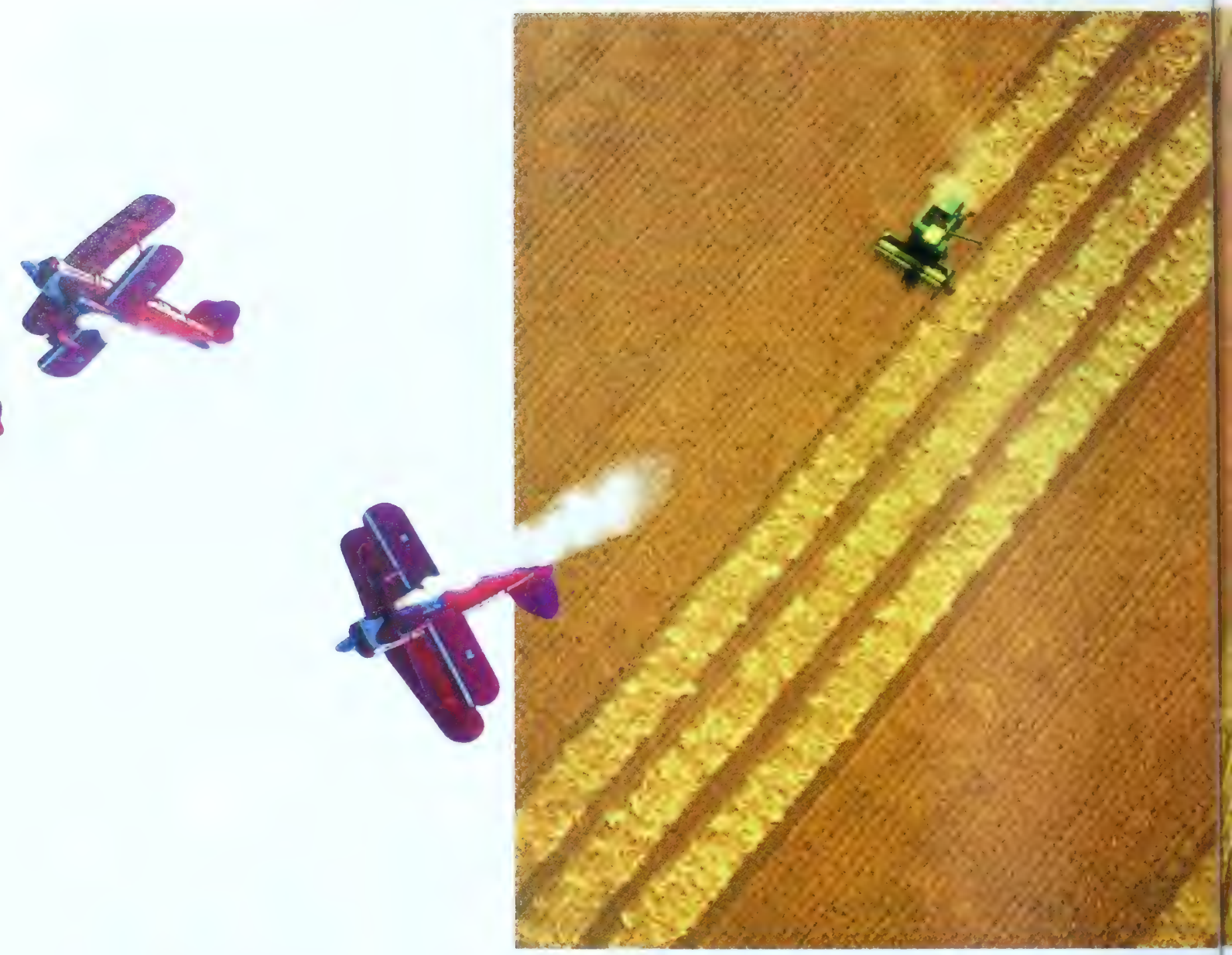
There are also individual cars with a special history. An Alfa-Romeo that raced in the Sicilian Targa Florio in 1923; General Pershing's 1918 Cadillac staff car; one of the three 1906 Cadillacs that were brought to England, disassembled, and rebuilt with parts from the others. It was this demonstration of interchangeable parts that won Cadillac the Dewer Trophy and inspired Henry Ford to make the automobile a mass-produced consumer item instead of a hand-built work of art.

Ghislain Mahy's collection is historically important for the cars it contains. It has that certain respect that goes to anything that is "the largest" of its kind. But more, it has a macabre fascination because of the intensity of Monsieur Mahy's monomania. We have here the example of an obviously wealthy entrepreneur who has chosen to spend the bulk of his life sequestered in a drafty warehouse, unhurriedly working from dawn to dusk to arrest decay on hundreds of old cars other people care nothing about.

A cynic might argue that the natural state for an antique automobile is not shiny and smelling of leather and oil but musty and dented and covered with surface rust, smelling of forgotten vices. Because he refuses to accept this natural state, Ghislain Mahy—and all car collectors—are possessed of a towering hubris, a willingness to contest the Natural Order of Things. Monsieur Mahy does not live on such a philosophical plane. He says simply with a shrug, "I am an engineer, an engineer who appreciates the automobile."

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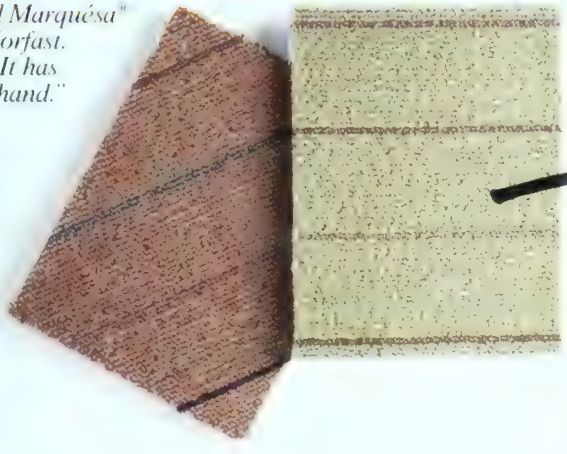
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BY ALAN PRYCE-JONES PHOTOGRAPHS BY OBERTO GILI

Sister Parish, *above,* with her pekes: Nanni on her lap and Ricky on the footstool. *Opposite:* In a corner of her new living room, a painted black glass and gilt 18th-century English table sits between the Louis XV chairs covered in Lee Jofa fabric. To the right of a papier-mâché urn on an Ionic column against the Alan Campbell wallpaper is a 19th-century English table with a dragon candelabra.



She does not aim to create a Brideshead, the evocation of a gasp, but to fit livable rooms to those who live in them



Another view of the living room, where a portrait of Sister Parish hangs over the mantel, with painted bronze dogs, enamel candlesticks, and old prints; on the left a late-18th-century girandole. Hand-painted silk-and-velvet pillows carry through the floral motif on a sofa covered in Scalamandré damask. Behind is an English 18th-century mirror that belonged to her family. The carpet is Aubusson.





In the library, *above,* a French screen showing a cage and various birds is behind a painted Italian table with a Chinese decoupage vase lamp and a book about a peke called *Wee Jade Button*. *Opposite:* Also in the library is an 18th-century English secretary filled with ivory objects and a Chippendale chair covered in needlepoint.

"They all ask me the same question," says Mrs. Parish (known to a large part of the world as "Sister"). She speaks in a low, you might say tentative, voice, but nothing she says is tentative. "They all ask me, 'How did you get into this?' " A dull question, she implies.

"This" is the business of making other people's houses attractive: an art as well as a business and one at which Sister preeminently excels. For more than fifty years now she has been doing exactly that.

I think back to the early 1930s. The Harry Parishes at that time were a newly married couple, and they were living in the shadow of the Depression. Not only were they an attractive couple but they owned pretty things. Sister's parents had footholds in New York and Paris; she grew up in fine rooms finely set out. "I had no formal education," she says. "I just had my natural instincts to rely on. I was never a scholar like John Fowler." She resembled in many ways a London counterpart, Lady Colefax, who, also in the Depression years, turned a gift for creating warm and welcoming interiors into a vocation.

Imperceptibly Sister began to distribute her own likings among her friends, until today she has created for herself an exemplary position as arbiter of taste, as counselor, as inspiration for two generations of clients and disciples. Partly she has done this by force of character. Nobody would dare go to Sister as simply a decorator, as a clever lady who knows how to fix up a fine and fashionable room. She has perfected a lifetime habit of getting to know and understand those who seek her help. She crystallizes their impulses and nourishes their understanding. There is nothing tentative about Sister; she is entirely to the point.

Her new Fifth Avenue apartment, once the home of Gloria Swanson, shows how her talent works when it is given free rein. It is an apartment at street level, with a paved courtyard garden in which the tutelary deities of the house, her two pekes, Nanni and Henryk (named after a favorite client, Henryk de Kwiatkowski), can take the air. "I haven't bought anything new," she says, "I just use what I have. Everything here has a meaning for me. It belonged to my father, like that desk. Or Harry and I found it in a French château. Or it reminds me of a friend. Or I found it amusing. You don't need to go shopping. You make do with what you have."

Admittedly this is easier if you already possess ravishing objects—some of the first order, some content to be merely ravishing—and if you know how to display them. Ivories are strewn on flat surfaces, and polished wooden boxes—a glowing apple, say—nestle against a tortoiseshell birdcage. *(Text continued on page 280)*



There is nothing dry-as-dust about Sister's scholarship. She plays it down perhaps, but it backs her every design



Fantasy chinoiserie painted panels from Philippe Farley hang in the library. On a table covered in a fabric from Clarence House is an ivory, tortoiseshell, and porcupine quill birdcage along with an Oriental napping cat. Chairs around the table are covered in Cowtan & Tout chintz, and armchairs in a Brunschwig glazed chintz. The custom painted sisal carpet is from Patterson, Flynn & Martin.



And she is a dab hand at swags and pelmets. Where other designers often suffocate a room in sheer excess of fabric, her effects, if rich, are also light



In her very feminine bedroom Sister Parish used chintz from Sanderson for the curtains, armchair, bed trim; the bedspread chintz is from Cowtan & Tout. In front of the oval Adam mirror is a bust of Sister. Left of the mirror is a tin candle bracket with porcelain flowers. Beyond the bed is a 19th-century painted Italian desk with an early-19th-century English chair painted with putti and garlands.



THE BEST OF THE CENTURY





A personal collection of decorative arts, discerningly selected and intriguingly displayed, helps redefine the notion of what is a modern classic

BY MARTIN FILLER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN HALL

The living-room mantel, *opposite,* dazzles with modern design treasures. Beneath the *verre églomisé* panel painted by Jean Dupas for the S.S. *Normandie,* 1934, Puiforcat silver from the 1920s. *Above left:* One of many effective groupings: a bronze statuette by Maude St. Jewett, lit by Donald Deskey's sawtooth lamp, c. 1928; circular mirror by Jacques-Émile Ruhlmann, c. 1928; digital clock by Kem Weber, c. 1930. *Above right:* Walter von Nessen torchère lamp, 1928; *Guitar and Tennis,* photo by M. Tabard, 1929; gouache of lamp by Paul Brandt, c. 1930; silver tea service by Desney, c. 1927.





A pair of suede club chairs, *right,* by Josef Hoffmann, c. 1904, flanked by Pierre Chareau's fan table, 1926, and Frank Lloyd Wright's Larkin Building steel swivel chair, 1904. Behind last, Piero Fornasetti's wood trompe-l'oeil secretary, c. 1950. Burlwood low table by Jean-Michel Frank, c. 1930. *Above:* Locomotive sculpture by Joël and Jan Martel, c. 1927.

Lately scholars and curators have been concerned with presenting a more accurate picture of Modernism than the one that prevailed for decades. Few private collectors have benefited more handsomely from the new inclusive attitude than the assembler of this superb survey of the decorative arts of the first half of this century. His collection seems far larger than it is because of its range (encompassing Art Deco *objets de luxe,* streamlined appliances, utilitarian office furnishings, and functionless caprices) and its provocative juxtapositions, which set up unexpected dialogues between stylistically disparate but formally related pieces. Several of these works appear in the Brooklyn Museum's "The Machine Age in America: 1918–1941," opening on October 17. This is a welcome confirmation of the quality of these marvelous objects, but here in their home setting the only endorsement needed is one's eye. □ *Editor: Elizabeth Sverbeyeff Byron*





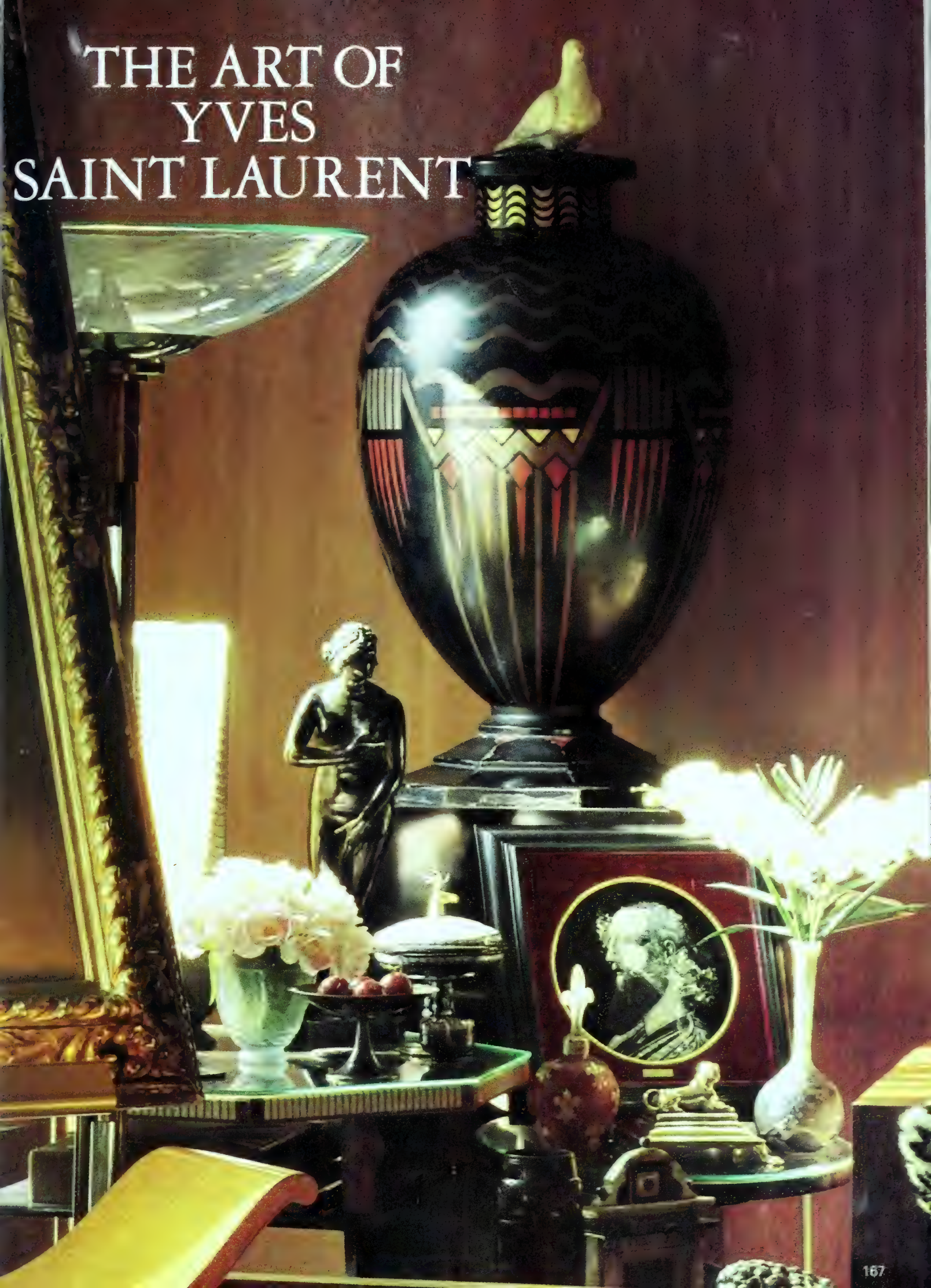
The machine aesthetic of early Modernism is celebrated in this arrangement on Marcel Breuer's two-tiered tubular-steel and glass table for Thonet, 1928. To the left of Charles Sheeler's photograph of a factory is a glass-shaded chrome lamp, 1928, by Wilhelm Wagenfeld, head of the Bauhaus metal workshop. To the right, a black-faced clock by Gilbert Rohde. In the foreground, a 1920s French cigarette case. On the lower shelf, a simple silver serving tray by Kalo, Chicago, 1914.

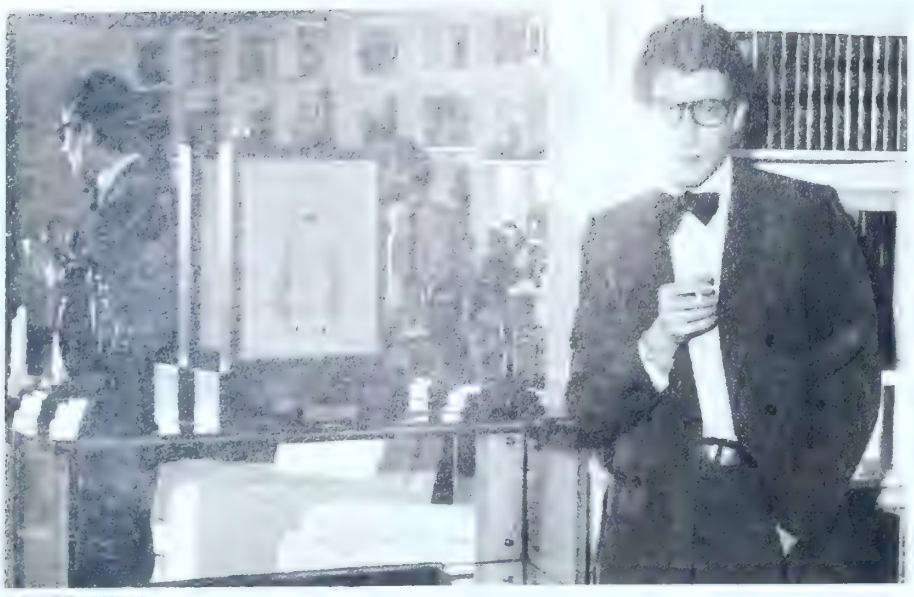


The collector's strong interest in industrial design inspired this array of utilitarian objects. Under a triple-arm floor lamp by Barbieri, 1949, an Alvar Aalto table holds, from left, a mantel clock by Gilbert Rohde, 1937; fluted glass vase by George Sakier, c. 1935; *Florence,* photo by F. Henri, 1928; ice gun by Opco for WearEver, 1930s; Walter Dorwin Teague's Kodak Bantam camera, 1936; aluminum coffeepot by Lurelle Guild, c. 1934; enameled thermos jug by Henry Dreyfuss, c. 1935.


D. LUÍS MARÍA DE CÍSTUE Y MARTÍNEZ
DOS
Y OCHO MESES D SI
F. GOYA

THE ART OF YVES SAINT LAURENT





ALEXANDER LIBERMAN

In their apartment on the rue de Babylone, Yves Saint Laurent and Pierre Bergé conduct a lively dialogue between art and style

BY JOHN RICHARDSON
PHOTOGRAPHS BY FRANÇOIS HALARD

Among the treasures in the grand salon, *preceding pages,* Goya's early portrait *Boy with a Dog* on an easel and, in front, a bronze Bacchus by Garnier; on the right a Limoges enamel of Henri II, a bronze of Aphrodite by Michel Anguier and a Jean Dunand vase. *Above:* Yves Saint Laurent in the library. *Opposite:* François-Xavier Lalanne bird seats give a fanciful air to the garden terrace, off the library.

Some of the greatest art patrons and collectors—French ones especially—have been couturiers. Paul Poiret commissioned Matisse and Dufy to design stuffs for him, while also buying (and selling) modern art. A few years later Jacques Doucet, advised by André Breton, the Surrealists' leader, assembled one of the finest collections of modern painting—including Picasso's *Demoiselles d'Avignon*—as well as the famous library that bears his name. At the same time Jeanne Lanvin not only commissioned some of the most imaginative Art Deco interiors, she also put together a remarkable collection of Impressionist and Nabis paintings. Likewise, Edward Molyneux—English by birth, French by adoption—assembled an exquisite collection of French nineteenth-century paintings (now, thanks to Mrs. Mellon Bruce, in the National Gallery, Washington). Schiaparelli, on the other hand, was out to shock and so went in for Dali and the Surrealists, while Chanel amassed exotic objets d'art fashioned out of rich and exotic materials. Christian Dior, who had done a stint as an art dealer, was even more eclectic in his taste, which encompassed the *haute époque* and artists as different as Bérard and Braque. As for contemporaries, we should not overlook Hubert de Givenchy, whose stylish collection pays tribute to Rothko as well as the *roi soleil.*

But none of the above, except perhaps the remarkable Doucet, collected on the scale of Yves Saint Laurent. Aided and abetted by his partner, Pierre Bergé, Saint Laurent has filled—indeed, crammed—his magnificent apartment on the rue de Babylone with a hoard of museum scope and quality. Insofar as he had any preconceived plan, it was to aim for the highest quality within reach of his pocket and never settle for second-best—bargains, minor works, or meretricious substitutes. If at the outset of his career as a collector Saint Laurent specialized in Art Deco objects and furniture, it was because the cream of the crop was still available—at least in the sixties and early seventies—at relatively reasonable prices. Hence the consummate group of things by Jean Dunand (notably the two great vases in the salon), Jacques-Émile Ruhlmann, Pierre Chareau, Gustave Miklos, Armand-Albert Rateau, Eileen Gray, and many more stars of the period. Later, when the enormous success of his *maison de couture* enabled him to acquire virtually anything he wanted, Saint Laurent raised his sights. The result is one of the most distinguished collections of our day, a pantheon of major works by major figures of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. If Saint Laurent was ever tempted by lesser works—Orientalists and such like—these were relegated to the villa at Deauville or the house *(Text continued on page 273)*







A view of the grand salon looking toward two important paintings by Fernand Léger flanked by enormous Dunand vases; a third Léger is on the right. A wooden stool by Pierre Legrain is in center of four armchairs by Pierre Chareau. On the right is an African throne and a large Senufo sculpture in front of a Burne-Jones. To the left, a collection of Renaissance and Mannerist bronzes on an Eileen Gray table under the only Munch painting in France, *Seascape with a Figure,* and Matisse's *Vase of Flowers.* The parrot carpet is by Ernest Boiceau from the 1930s.



Another view of the grand salon with Brancusi's hieratic *Portrait of Madame L. R.* against the mirror over the fireplace. To the right is Picasso's *Still Life on a Gueridon* and just below a Cézanne watercolor of Mont-Sainte-Victoire; the oval portrait of Comtesse de La Rue is by Ingres. Among the many bronzes is *Hermès* by François Duquesnoy on the table beside the armchair by Eileen Gray; the leopard-print stool is by Gustave Miklos.





The *cabinet de glaces,* which leads to the entrance hall and a Greek marble torso. The mirrored decoration designed by Claude Lalanne adorns aubergine lacquered walls. A Dunand table with a collection of vases stands between a pair of armchairs by Jacques-Émile Ruhlmann; on right is an occasional table by Chareau beside chaise longue also by Ruhlmann. To one side of the Dunand table is a standard lamp by Armand-Albert Rateau. The carpet, with a motif of village roofs, is by Yvonne Fourneau.





The light-filled library downstairs opens onto the garden. In the foreground is a Roman marble reclining figure and, on the right between the windows, an early Mondrian, one of two in the room; on the left, a Matisse drawing juts out from the bookshelves. François-Xavier Lalanne designed the sheep and the whimsical bar in the shape of an egg. The bookshelves hold a miscellaneous collection of drawings and sculpture as well as a collection of Attic red-figured vases.





A Gobelins tapestry of Africa—one of a set of the four continents—hangs in the dining room. Between the windows is a marble relief of Louis XIV as a young man. The dining table was designed by Ruhlmann and in the center is a 17th-century Augsburg ewer and dish by David Beszmann.



SWISS PRECISION

In the architectural tradition of the Ticino, Mario Campi and Franco Pessina create a house of sophisticated contrasts

BY WERNER SELIGMANN
PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALO ZANETTA



South of the Alps, the Swiss canton of the Ticino is a small region of unique beauty, with snowcapped mountains in the background and the green, rolling landscape of the fore-Alps extending into Italy. Distinctly Italian, not only in landscape and language but in spirit, the Ticino is proud of the fact that it produced three of the finest architects of the Italian Baroque—Maderna, Carlo Fontana, and the greatest of them, Borromini. There exists a special consciousness about its architecture today as well, for in the 1960s the center of Swiss modern architecture shifted from Zurich, which had played such an important role in its early days, to the Ticino.

The house you see here belongs to a series of extraordinary accomplishments in the Ticino by the group of architects current-

The visitor is first confronted by a two-story-high marble wall base, *above*. Barely visible between two small trees is the white-marble frame of the main entrance. *Opposite:* The checkerboard marble of the entrance court responds to the grid of the concave glass-block wall, through which one sees that the courtyard continues inside around a sculptural stair.







Above the entrance and across the space occupied by the stairwell, a narrow bridgelike passageway, *left,* connects the living room to the dining room. The grid of the glass-block entrance wall is repeated at other scales and to other purposes; the living-room window wall reflects the volume of the retreat "suspended" over the seating area. *Above:* That seating area centers a two-story volume defined by eight round columns. Art and furnishings are located in places designed specifically for them.

ly identified with the region. Fabio Reinhardt, Bruno Reichlin, Mario Vacchini, and especially Mario Botta and Campi and Pessina have become international figures as architects whose Modernist aesthetic incorporates the traditions of Swiss craftsmanship. The work of Botta and Campi and Pessina has been extensively published and exhibited in the United States. Mario Campi has had the closest ties to American architects and schools of architecture—since 1976 he has taught at Syracuse University, Cornell, the Rhode Island School of Design, and Harvard—and this house in particular, built in 1982, owes a great debt to Campi's intense involvement with the American intellectual and artistic community.

It can be said of Mario Campi that he is an architect's architect. Quite obviously, when the owners of the house approached Campi and his partner, Franco Pessina, they were selecting architects who would be able to elevate their requirements into the realm of art. Those requirements were extremely complex, involving intricate circulation sep-



From landing on main floor, *right,* one's view is a deep cut through the entry courtyard/stairwell space. Bedroom level, above, is marked by sculpture on small balcony. *Above:* Looking up to main level from entry level. *Below:* Light gray lacquer bed in master bedroom was designed by Campi and Pessina. Curtains are of the lightest gray silk.

arating public and private areas as well as service access to the various parts of the house. The design was further complicated by the very strict zoning and local building restrictions, which severely limit the site coverage and the building height.

The site of this house is small and on a steep slope, as are most sites in the Ticino, and has a magnificent view to the south, from which direction it is approached along a narrow road. The steepness meant extensive grading and the use of retaining walls, resulting in a succession of terraces following the slope of the ground.

Sectional organization of the house was kept simple. The main part of the house rests on a heavy podium or base that contains a housekeeper's residence, guest rooms, the typical Swiss air-raid shelter, a wine cellar, and assorted support spaces. Since the site also slopes slightly to the west, the servant's apartment and guest rooms were given their own private outdoor terrace. The principal social areas of the house begin where the top of the base ends, and the floor above contains bedrooms and other private spaces, which are connected by a stair and elevator to an







The main part of the house, *right*, is a single rectangular volume. Through the window wall of the space comprising the living room and the main stair, marked by the deep fascia above, can be seen the owner's special retreat and balcony with sculpture. *Above:* An axonometric drawing reveals that the retaining wall viewed from the street is actually the façade of the lowest level of the house.

expansive roof terrace.

The stepped section design is not apparent on approaching the site. One is initially confronted by a large, curved two-story-high rusticated retaining wall of carefully laid blocks of dark gray marble, profusely covered with overhanging plants. The wall, though of different material, is reminiscent of the type of retaining walls associated with wine cellars. But the well-composed openings and the refined material suggest that the base is occupied. The entrance gate, the smallest opening, is immediately identified because it is the only vertical and two-story opening, further emphasized by an exquisitely detailed, polished white marble frame. Following the curve of the base, one is allowed a view of part of the gleaming white structure of the main house above, and through a carefully located opening in the west end of the base, it is possible to perceive the extent of the entire house. In a very poetic gesture, the heavy wall of the base suddenly becomes a visually transparent overlay in the entire composition.
(Text continued on page 246)







GENTLE FOLK AT WORK

George Schoellkopf tells how he and landscape painter Ron Johnson restored a Colonial house and created a garden in the Sissinghurst style

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERNST BEADLE

Visitors often tell us what a warm, cheerful place this is. They may not understand the folk-art collection or realize that the furniture is eighteenth century and American, but they seem to like the feeling of it all, and that is the best sort of compliment. Period antiques and art are important but never enough when restoring an old house. There must also be a dialogue between the character of the house and the presence of the people who live there. If the dialogue is sympathetic, then the result should be as pleasing to the untrained eye as to that of the connoisseur. This is what we aimed for in decorating Hollister House.

Hollister House dates from just before the American Revolution, although it looks earlier. This part of Connecticut was backwoods in the eighteenth century, and the builders were a little behind the times in terms of style. The house is not exceptional architecturally, but it is very charming, a classic New England saltbox with lovely wide floorboards and mellow paneled walls—just the kind of place I used to dream about as a boy when I first became fascinated with antiques. Later, when I began to deal in eighteenth-century American furniture and folk art, I knew that one day I would have to find an old house like this to hold all the things I was buying to resell but deciding I just couldn't part with. Happily for me Ron Johnson, who is a landscape painter, shared my enthusiasm for the eighteenth century and was always urging me to keep some particularly special treasure. He has the artist's knack of knowing instantly whether something has real quality.

Besides the house itself, both of us were enormously taken with the countryside here. It is unusual to find an early house in such a beautiful setting, and we counted ourselves extremely fortunate in this respect. *(Text continued on page 270)*

From the entry of Hollister House one sees past the front door and into the dining room, originally the parlor and before restoration the kitchen. Bannister-back sidechairs, c. 1740, furnish the entry. In dining room an 18th-century New England Queen Anne lowboy and a Windsor fanback armchair. Ron Johnson painted the floor.



A New England hutch, c. 1740, in keeping room wears its original paint and displays 19th-century American slipware. Knucklearm sackback chair is by 18th-century Connecticut cabinetmaker Amos Dennison Allen.

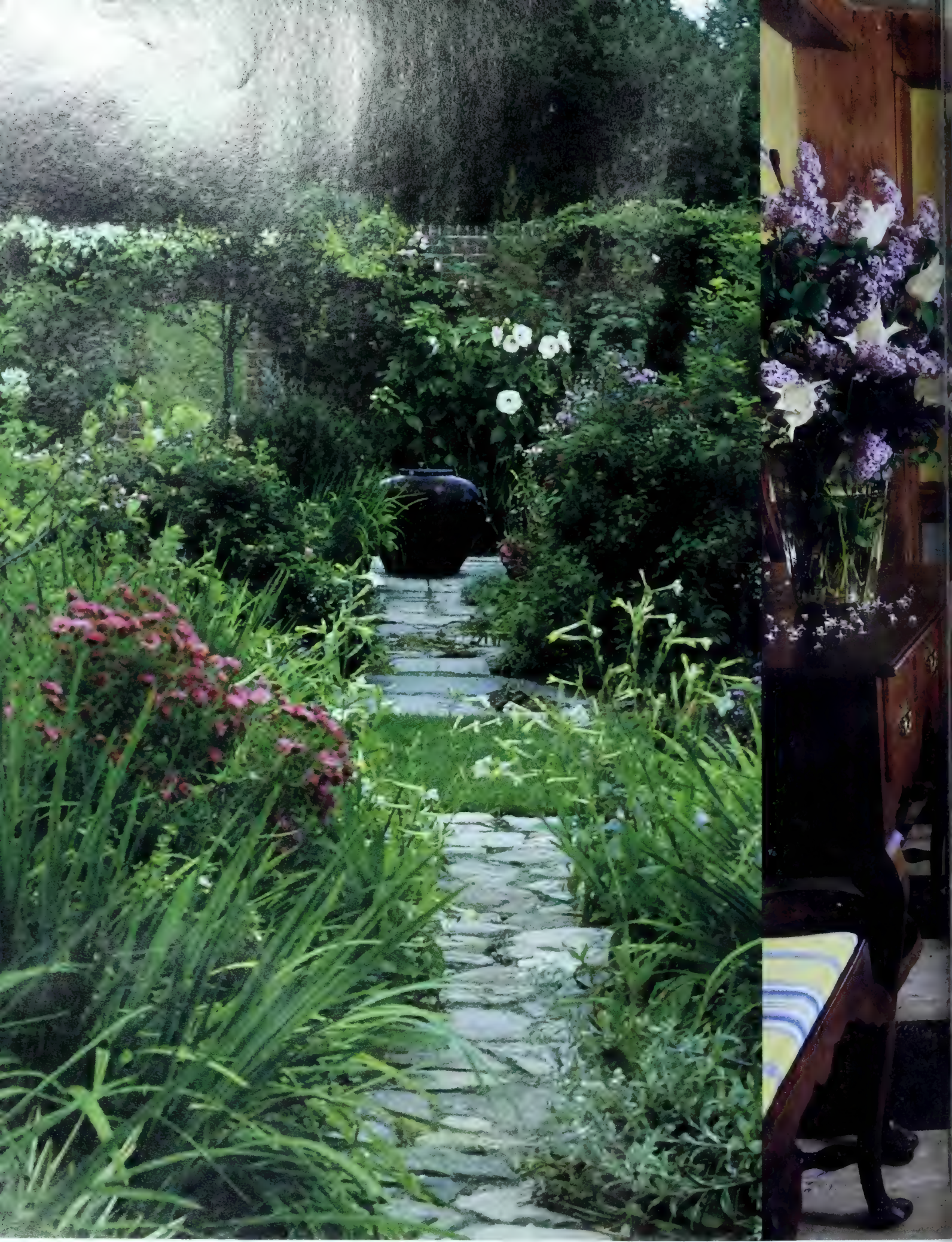


Above a painted-and-grained miniature blanket chest from Pennsylvania, c. 1820, hangs a hooked rug with an abstract songbird-and-flowers design. New England Carver armchair, 17th century, stands on hearth.





Ivy geraniums and silver *Helichrysum petiolatum* overflow an old laundry copper set in the mowed walk. Lavender asters edge mowing stones on both sides. In foreground at left, spoon chrysanthemum.



Bisecting the mowed walk, a "crazy paving" stone path heads toward walled garden. To the right of a Chinese storage jar grows a white *Hibiscus Moscheutos* with eight-inch flowers. The only tree is a plum.



At a dining table set with Canton china and rosemary topiary are a Windsor fanback armchair and bowback side chairs. Brass chandelier is Flemish, 18th century. Portraits from Pennsylvania, 1828, are in their original frames.



In [illegible] bedroom of 1820 wing: a portrait of his wife by New England artist John Usher Parsons, 18th-century [illegible]ndsor fanback sidechair, late-19th-century hooked rug, late-18th-century tiger-maple chest-on-frame.



From the top of the retaining wall an encompassing view of the Gray Garden includes a spectacular yew topiary. Foxgloves grow between house and an Italian oil jar from the 19th century.



The owners often swim in the reflecting pool, parallel to the mowed walk. Magenta flowers in foreground, scattered throughout garden, are *Silene Armeria*; helianthemum also borders path.



Corner cupboard in the master bedroom downstairs is original to house and displays 18th-century English delftware, an Irish delft platter. On Spanish-foot sidechair, a 19th-century ragdoll, both from New England.



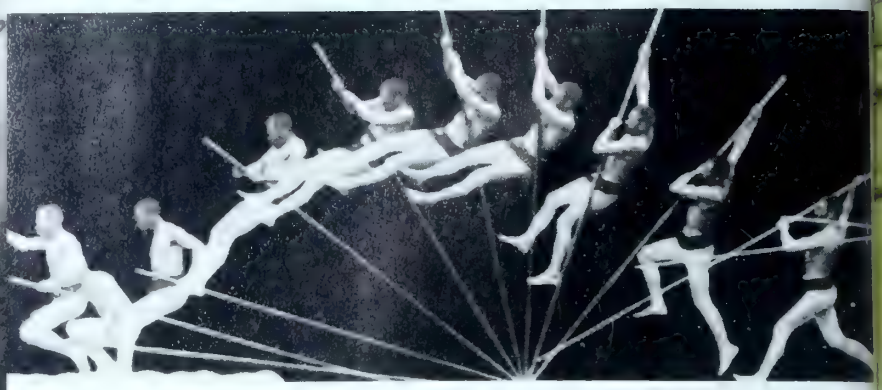
FUTURISMO CON BRIO

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRISTOPHE DUGIED



The Italian Futurists worshiped speed and idolized machines. *Opposite:* In the *cortile* of the Palazzo Grassi, a 1910 Blériot monoplane above, a Bugatti, 1910–21, and a Fiat, 1908–10, behind the colonnade. *This page:* Mario Sironi's *The Airplane* (1916).





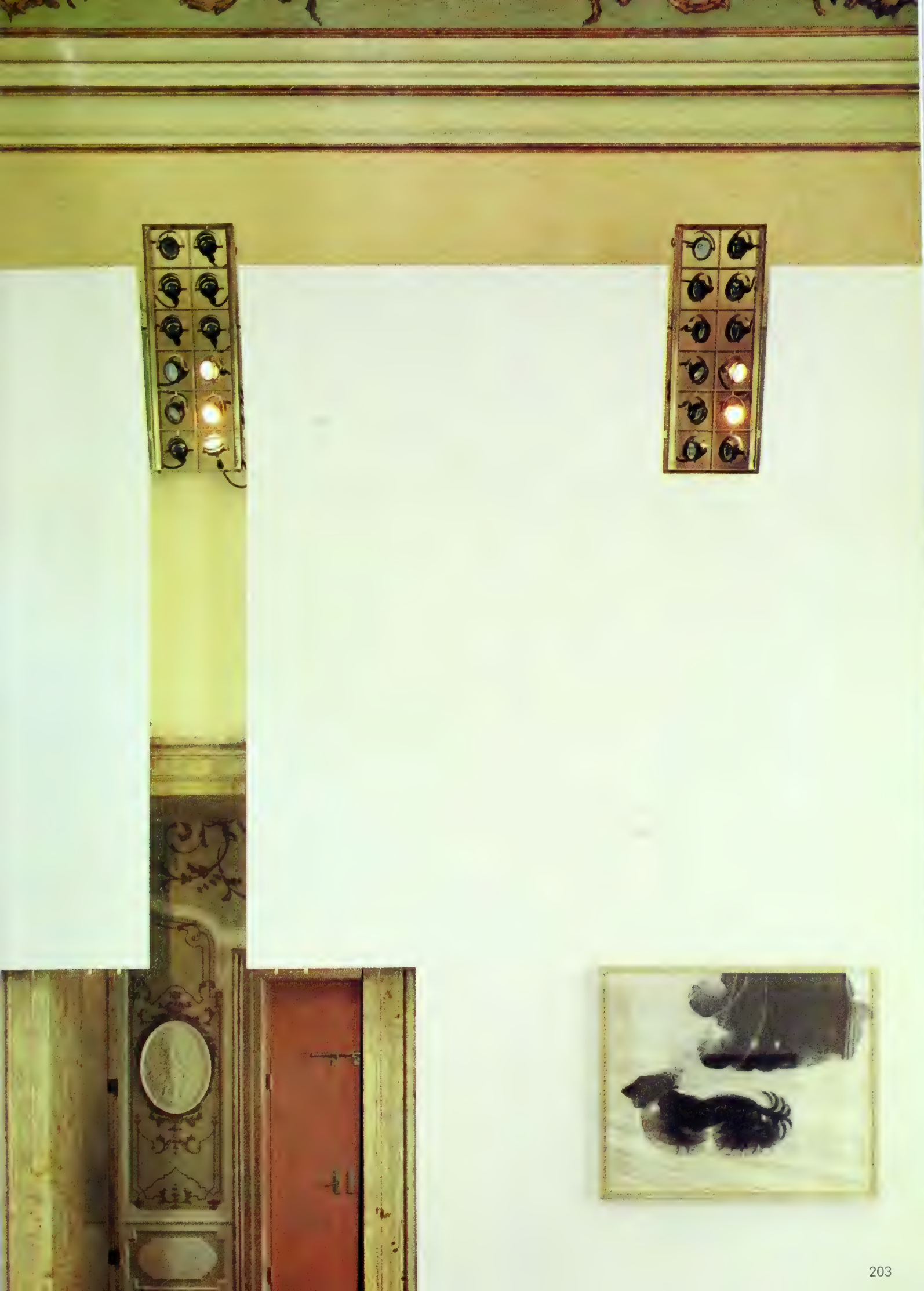
Futurism, the revolutionary art that lived for tomorrow and fearlessly propelled Italy into the Modern Age

BY MARTIN FILLER

One fine day in 1910, Venice experienced an unexpected blizzard: not snow but some 80,000 leaflets flurried down from the Clock Tower onto the Piazza San Marco below. Startled passersby were even more amazed by what they read. "We repudiate ancient Venice," the handbills defiantly declared. "Let us fill the stinking little canals with the rubble of the tottering, infected old palaces. Let us burn the gondolas, rocking chairs for idiots, and raise to the sky the majestic geometry of metal bridges and smoke-crowned factories, abolishing the drooping curves of ancient buildings. Let the reign of the divine Electric Light come at last, to free Venice from her venal hotel-room moonlight." This astonishing statement was signed with the names of four young artists—Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, Umberto Boccioni, Carlo Carrà, and Luigi Russolo—who were members of one of the strangest, most catalytic movements in the history of art: Futurism.

There is a delicious irony in Europe's first major retrospective of Futurist art being held in Venice; the Futurists, though tireless promoters of their own work, might have been less than delighted. Their chief instigator, Marinetti (a poet and editor of the experimental literary journal *Poesia*), urged in his founding Futurist Manifesto of 1909, "Deviate the course of canals to flood the cellars of museums! Oh! may the glorious canvases drift helplessly!" But "Futurism & Futurisms," on view at the Palazzo Grassi through October 12, firmly anchors the art of this movement in the Modernist mainstream. Curated by Pontus Hulten, the show is a bold if belated bid to put *(Text continued on page 266)*

Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *left,* poet and founder of Futurism, in a photograph by Coletti overpainted by its subject with *parole in libertà* ("words in freedom"), a key Futurist concept. *Above:* Étienne-Jules Marey's 1890 chronophotograph of a pole vaulter prefigures the Futurists' interest in the "scientific" depiction of motion. *Opposite:* Giacomo Balla's *Dynamism of a Dog on a Leash* (1912) in a gallery at the Palazzo Grassi.







Gae Aulenti and Antonio Foscari renovate Venice's Palazzo Grassi as a world center for modern art

BY DORIS SAATCHI

Outshone by its dazzling sister palaces on Venice's Grand Canal, the Palazzo Grassi has served for two hundred years as a fittingly sober monument to the industry and shrewdness of the brothers Grassi, the merchant princes for whom it was built. Though protected from irreversible changes by the city's ironclad preservation laws, it was subjected through the years to several unsympathetic "facelifts" and in less than a century had eight changes of ownership, no doubt accounting for the down-at-the-heels look it has had in recent years.

But in just under eight months, new owner Giovanni Agnelli of the Fiat group of companies, new director Pontus Hulten—formerly of the Centre Pompidou and the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art—and a work force headed by architects Gae Aulenti of Milan and Antonio Foscari of Venice have given this dowager palace a new lease on life as one of Italy's most up-to-date exhibition spaces.

Aulenti has chosen pink and green for the Grassi's new garb: tawny pink to reflect the terra-cotta tile roofs, peculiar chimney pots, and russet marble floors that are characteristic of the city, and, in homage to Venice's avenues of water, a turquoise green that fifty years ago was often seen in public swimming pools, sanatoria, and travel posters for exotic destinations, a shade of green almost as daring as the pea green stockings she wore on opening day.

"I wanted to bring the canal outside up to every floor," says Hulten, who is from *(Text continued on page 269)*

The wide-ranging program of the Futurists sought to embrace all art forms. *Opposite left:* Detail of Antonio Sant'Elia's *New City,* published in his 1914 *Manifesto of Futurist Architecture. Opposite right:* Detail of Giacomo Balla's *Screen with Speed Lines* (1917). *Above:* The huge black letters at the entrance to the Futurism show in Venice are based on a 1914 stage design by Balla. *Right:* The Grand Canal façade of the Palazzo Grassi, halfway between San Marco and the Rialto, built to the designs of Giorgio Massari from 1745 to 1760.







AT HOME WITH THE FUTURE

In New York, Lydia Winston Malbin's Futurist art rivals Italy's best

BY GERALD SILK

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LIZZIE HIMMEL

Not far from The Metropolitan Museum of Art, in one of upper Fifth Avenue's newer buildings, the apartment of Mrs. Lydia Winston Malbin houses a remarkable and bold collection of modern art. Lydia Malbin began collecting over fifty years ago, assisted by her first husband, Harry Lewis Winston, and continued with her late husband, Dr. Barnett Malbin. The hard core of the Malbin collection is Italian Futurism—the best ensemble in private or public hands—acquired mostly in the early 1950s when few people showed much interest in it; the collection includes outstanding pieces from most of the other major early-twentieth-century movements: Cubism, Fauvism, Orphism, Synchromism, Expressionism, Constructivism, De Stijl, Purism, Dada, and Surrealism. It is brought up to date with a major collection of works by the COBRA group (the postwar movement founded in Paris which stands for Copenhagen, Brussels, and Amsterdam, the homes of such artists as Karel Appel, Pierre Alechinsky, and Corneille) as well as paintings by Jackson Pollock, Mark Tobey, Morris Louis, Kenneth Noland, Frank Stella, and Andy Warhol; and it is rounded out by a vast assemblage of modern drawings, graphics, posters, and artists' books, ranging from

Lydia Winston Malbin on a Hans Wegner settee in the living room surrounded by her collection, left to right: Umberto Boccioni's *Anti-Graceful* (1912), Josef Albers's *Structure in Blue* (c. 1926), Boccioni's *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space* (1913), and Medardo Rosso's *Ecce Puer* (c. 1906–07). A Picasso owl from 1947–48 is on the right.



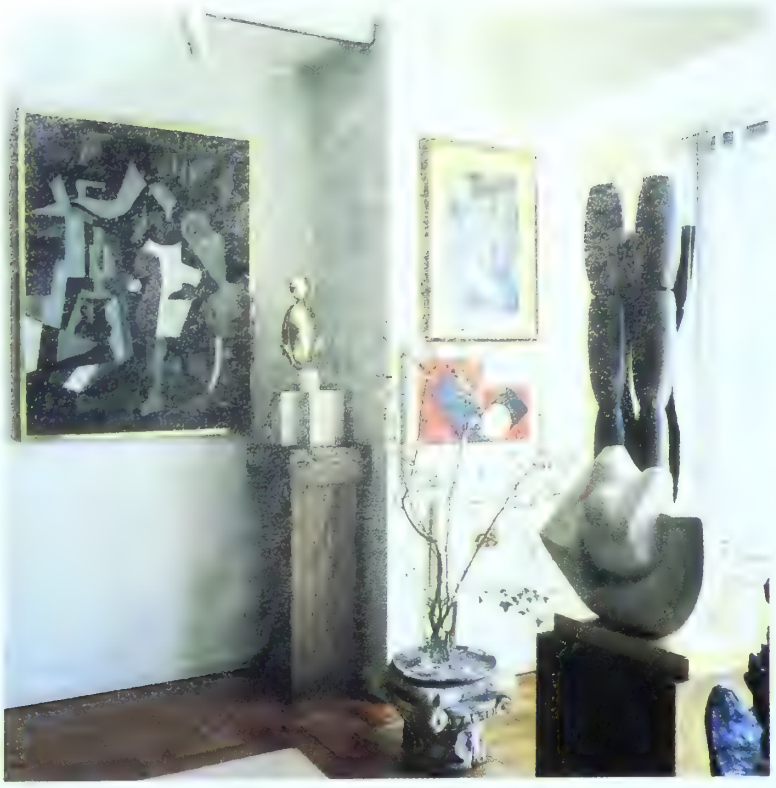
Arp and Archipenko through Miró and Masson to Rauschenberg and Oldenburg. The Pollock, a 1945 piece entitled *Moon Vessel,* was purchased in 1946 straight out of Peggy Guggenheim's gallery in New York. Mrs. Malbin was actually looking for an André Masson, but she spotted the Pollock and, liking it, paid the few hundred dollars, tucked the painting under her arm, and brought it home on the train.

Now in her eighties, the energetic and diminutive Lydia Winston Malbin exudes a dynamism and vigor not unlike that of the art surrounding her, and she vividly recounts events from her years of collecting as if they had just occurred. She formed the collection with special care and never regarded art as decoration or investment. "My objective was not to be an art collector," Mrs. Malbin recently told me. "I wanted to learn about modern art, and I felt the only way was by living with it." Whenever Lydia Malbin was interested in a new piece, she would begin modestly, researching the artist or movement, and then grow bolder, consulting dealers, scholars, and curators,

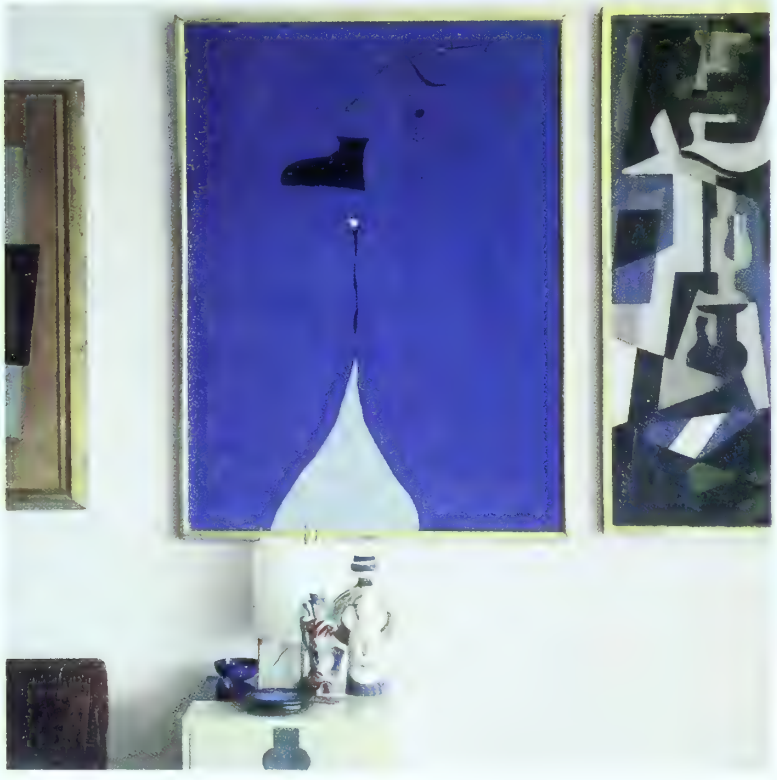


In the living room, left to right: Boccioni's *The Street Pavers* (1911), Giacomo Balla's *Crowd and Landscape* (c. 1915), Gino Severini's *Sea = Dancer* (1913–14), Balla's *Work* (1902), Robert Delaunay's *Still Life with Red Tablecloth* (1937). On low easel at right is Severini's mosaic *Still Life with Épinette*.

eventually tracking down the artist if she could. Those who gave advice make up a distinguished group, including famous dealer, writer, and supporter of the Cubists Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, photographer and Modernist advocate Alfred Stieglitz, gallery owners Rose Fried and Peggy Guggenheim, refugee dealers Curt Valentin and Karl Nierendorf, and art historians and museum curators and directors Alexander Dorner, Alfred Barr, Willem Sandberg, and Joshua Taylor. She met, formed solid friendships with, and acquired works directly from such









In a corner of the living room, *top left,* Maria Blanchard's *Composition with Figure* (1916), next to Constantin Brancusi's *The Blond Negress* (1933). On right, top to bottom: Albert Gleizes's *The Bather* (1912), Erich Buchholz's *In the Beginning Was the Circle* (1922), and Buchholz's *Composition* (1925). Rudolf Hoflehner and Henry Moore sculptures are on the right. *Top right:* Beyond the Picasso rug *Blue Jacqueline* is Mondrian's *Composition in Black and White with Blue Square* (1935), next to a 1964 Stella over a Tommi Parzinger chair. On right a partial view of Morris Louis's *Quo Mine Losso* (1959). *Above left:* Miró's *Personage; The Brothers Fratellini* (1927) hangs over Picasso's 1950s ceramic *Female Figure* and Noguchi lamp. *Above right:* Boccioni's palette and *Self-Portrait* (c. 1908).

artists as Constantin Brancusi, Jean Arp, Alexander Calder, Fernand Léger, Marcel Duchamp, Gino Severini, Tristan Tzara, Naum Gabo, and Antoine Pevsner, among many others. "One of the great privileges of the collector," Mrs. Malbin said in "Collecting Modern Art," an essay written in 1957 with her first husband, is "to know the personality of those who created the works, to listen to their ideas and try to comprehend their language." As a result, "each work . . . takes on special meaning and significance. The artist can continually speak to us through the object he has created." Summing up her feelings, she remarked, "It's not what is on the









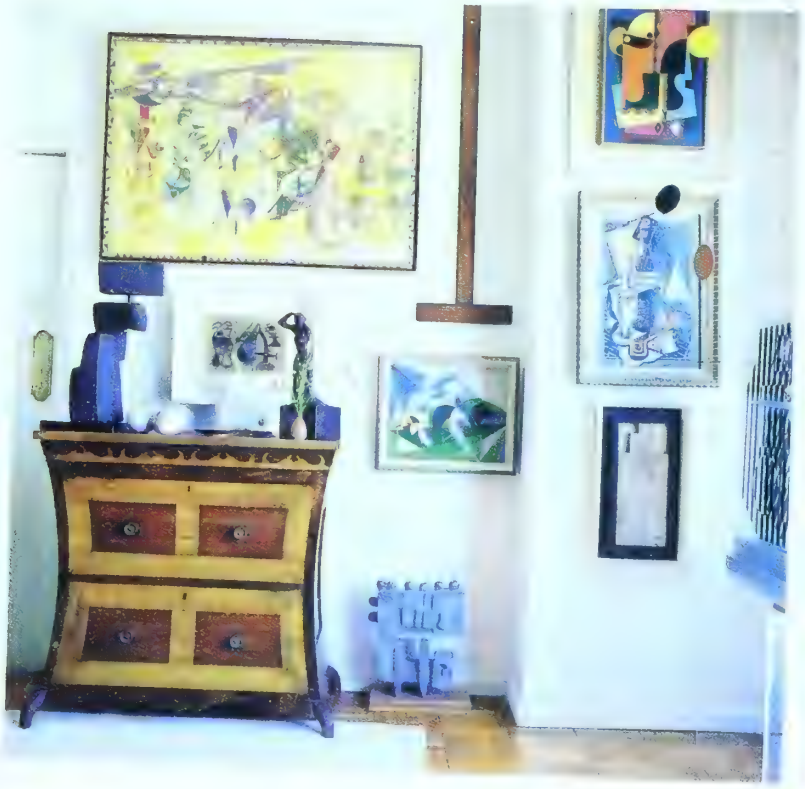
walls; it's what is behind the walls."

Paintings and drawings hang on nearly all the available wall surface. Mrs. Malbin believes in "multiple hangings" wherever possible. "It's the works that have to talk to each other," she says. It's also a question of space. The collection has always outgrown its various homes, and Mrs. Malbin has donated works to many museums and universities. Her present apartment is overflowing with art and many of the drawings, posters, and graphics are neatly stacked in closets.

Mrs. Malbin made sure that the furniture in the apartment would not compete *(Text continued on page 276)*

Balla's *Stairway of Farewells* (c. 1908), *top left,* with Léger's *Woman in an Armchair* (c. 1912–13), and Picasso's *Still Life with Guitar* (1921) in the living room. Medardo Rosso's *Man in the Hospital* (1889) sits on a Tommi Parzinger table on left. *Top right:* Kurt Schwitters's *Composition: Ashoff, Ellen* (1922) and Jean Arp's *Abstract Form II* (c. 1922) frame Hannel Cassidy's photograph of Mrs. Malbin with her pottery. *Above left:* In the library, the large Paul Feeley sculpture *Dabih* (1965) and, on right top, Mark Tobey's *Battle of Lights* (1956). *Above right:* Balla's *Path of a Gunshot* (c. 1918) is above the Hubert Dalwood sculpture *Object: Open Square* (1959) and, on right, Joachín Torres-García's *Composition* (1931) and a Wegner chair.





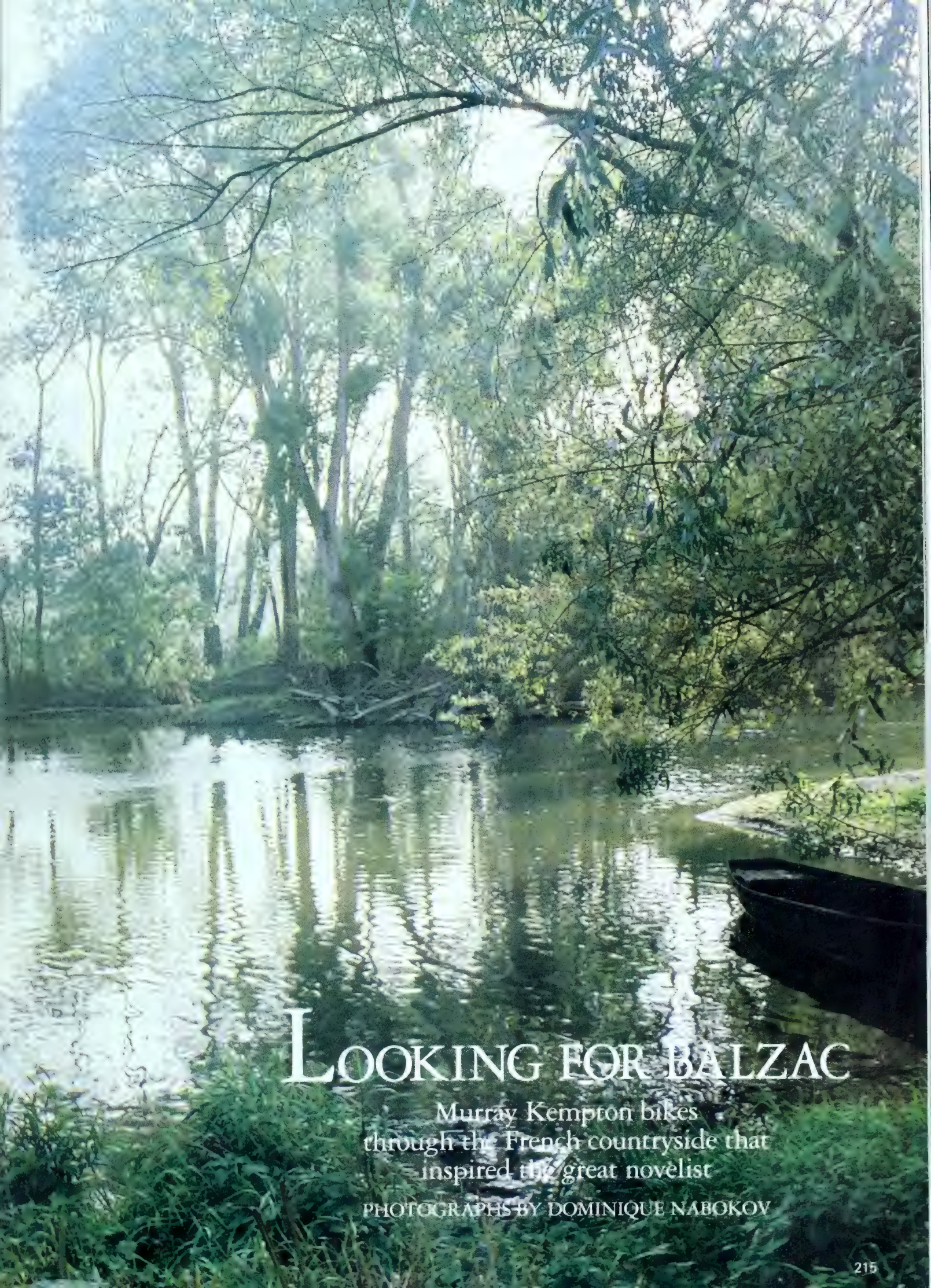


Three views of the library. *Right,* from left: Victor Vasarély's *Nethe II* (1963), Calder's *Mobile* (1949) over Balla's *The Fist of Boccioni* (c. 1915), and Germaine Richier's *Six-Headed Horse* (1953–56). Calder rug *Yellow Circle* is from late 1950s. *Top,* from left: Jean Metzinger's *Still Life with Pears* (1912–17), Otto Freundlich's *The Unity of Life and Death* (1936–38). On right, Picasso's *Portrait of Dora Maar* (1941) hangs over Julio González's *The Kiss* (1953) at right. *Above,* from left: Balla's *The Injection of Futurism* (c. 1918) over Miró's *Figures and Birds in Front of the Sun* (1930–39). To right of Albert Kahn's T-square, from top, Auguste Herbin's *Composition* (1921), Metzinger's *Still Life with Pipe* (1916), and Torres-García's *Composition.* Nevelson's *Personage One Plus Two* (c. 1947) is on the chest to left.





The old mill near Saché, from *The Lily of the Valley*



LOOKING FOR BALZAC

Murray Kempton bikes through the French countryside that inspired the great novelist

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DOMINIQUE NABOKOV



Author Murray Kempton near Saché



The small river Indre, at Saché

"... A melancholy spot [of Saché], full of harmonies too sad for superficial minds but dear to poets whose spirit is stricken. I myself at a later time lived its silence, its huge hoary trees and mystery that seemed to hang over that deserted hollow."

—THE CURÉ OF TOURS



The château said to be the model for Frapesle in *The Lily of the Valley.*



Saumur, city of *Eugénie Grandet*

The works of Balzac are full of Tours, but the works of Tours seem all but contrived to empty her of Balzac. The rue Émile Zola runs just north of what used to be the house where Zola's acknowledged master was born; and the street immediately south is named for Léon Gambetta, who spent three weeks in Tours after escaping the German siege of Paris in the fall of 1870. The map shows a rue Balzac obscurely tucked by the flank of the Hôtel de Ville; the rue George Sand is ten times longer, the rue Victor Hugo eight times, the rue Voltaire three times, and even the avenue celebrating a Dr. Guérin twice; and all are wider.

The bridge that is Tours's most prideful expression of its supreme command of the vistas of the Loire begins at the plaza that has been named Anatole France in grateful remembrance of the novelist who did the city no more signal service than the expense of a few summers here. Balzac is chopped down to a single exiguous forty-foot street; his claim on the organs of civic memory is otherwise apparent only in the Lycée Balzac, the Hôtel Balzac, and the Droguerie Balzac, a dry-goods store.

When Henry James came to Tours in the mid 1870s, he puzzled at the prominence of the statues of Rabelais and Descartes and at the absence of any monument to Balzac. That omission was remedied fourteen years later when a consortium of Balzac's admirers—Parisians, of course—assembled funds enough to move a seated bronze figure in the square that faces the Hôtel de Ville. The German forces of occupation carried it off in 1942 for smelting in one of their foundries. Rabelais and Descartes stood inviolable because they were marble and could not serve the fires of ordnance. The years since have stirred no noticeable impulse toward a new Balzac memorial. To Tours the Balzac who belongs elsewhere with the ages is still as dubiously provisional as it took him to be when he was alive.

In World War II, tyranny announced itself with artillery shells and liberation with aerial bombardments, and when each had done its offices, the markings of Balzac's boyhood were fainter than ever. And they have stayed that way. His first home had been gutted along with most of the headland of the rue Nationale, and when Tours had finished the prodigies of pious effort that have restored its haughtiest avenue to a pretty, if frigid, approximation of its eighteenth-century self, the architects of its reconstruction were content to leave the plaque and bas-relief that used to identify Balzac's birthplace still displaced in their lodging at the museum in the Château of Saché, twelve miles down the river.

The thirsty searcher is reduced then to hazarding the guess that the site, 45 years gone to dust, of the first breath drawn by Honoré Balzac must have been somewhere on the floor above the windows that display the polyester glories waiting to reward the patron of the Palais-des-Vêtements.

Here is a pervasive atmosphere of disdain conquering all but the outermost reaches of veneration, and the visitor is quickly cowed into thinking of the shade he had come to

worship as merely Honoré Balzac, the name whose plebian dross Balzac had essayed to gild with the "de" of aristocratic pretension. His native stones are as stingy with his suspicious "de" as they were with his legitimate due. The mandate of Tours's collective unconscious condemns him never to rise beyond being only "Balzac" except for the lonely "Honoré *de* Balzac, 1799–1850" that announces a street truncated and isolated enough from more-traveled ways to diminish the risk that it might be noticed by someone aware enough to grumble at a concession this unwarranted.

Such is the special chill of Tours for any member of the small fanatical Balzacian sect who comes to her with the Abbé Birotteau, Madame de Listomère, and Félix de Vandenesse presences so vividly alive for him that he half-expects to find their names attached to grand boulevards and who remains to scour her alleys for the meagerest reference to the enchanter who conjured them up.

Some show of respect, if not veneration, might have been anticipated for the house where the Abbé Birotteau lodged with Mademoiselle Gamard and writhed through such exquisite refinements of torment at her hands and the Abbé Troubert's. *The Curé of Tours* in no way spares Tours, to be sure, but only an extreme persistence of rancor could explain why Tours has been so unsparing to it.

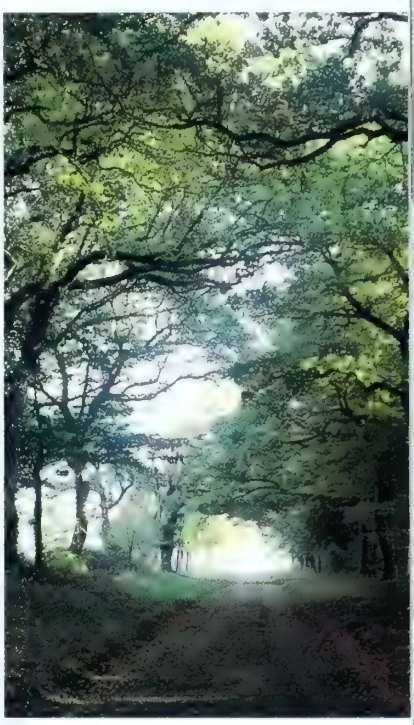
When the pilgrim inquires after the Maison Gamard, he is pointed to a house across from the apse of the cathedral. It is approximately where Balzac chose to place it, and a flying buttress has come to rest on a patch of earth that permits the vague inference that it might once have been Mademoiselle Gamard's "narrow little garden." And yet no structure could less plausibly be taken for the real thing; this is an eighteenth-century house—almost a mansion—and manifestly too bright and spread too wide to give the requisite nourishment to the dark and almost medieval implacabilities of the Gamard–Troubert conspiracy. Nothing in the aspect of the place evokes the "arabesques, the shape of the windows, the arch of the door," which, Balzac tells us, would immediately inform an archaeologist that "it had always been part of the [fifteenth-century] edifice with which it is blended."

But then the frustrated and confused eye happens upon a page of Dominique Hévier's exemplary little monograph on the cathedral of Tours and a photograph of the east wing of the cloister before its restoration, and there in plain sight is the Maison Gamard with the arch of its doors, the shape of its windows, and the flying buttress in the narrow garden that are the unmistakable elements of Balzac's description. He may very well have moved Mademoiselle Gamard a few meters north—to have invented two thousand characters is to be excused for having altered a site or so, but no other house could shelter the nest of spiders of his inspiration.

We travel to Saumur to bow our heads before the house of Eugénie Grandet and discover that the bombs of World War II have left nothing of it. Even its gloom has dissipated in the soft and sun-reflecting vapors rising from the Loire. We dutifully repine, but would Eugénie? Very probably not; she had known no happy days there before and after those precious, poisoned afternoons she had dreamed away in the garden with her Parisian cousin Charles.

The Abbé Birotteau was at once too meek and too obtuse to appreciate fully the malignity of the two monsters who contrived his destruction. But when we

(Text continued on page 248)



The allée des Adieux from *The Lily of the Valley.*



The farm of Père Grandet in Vouvray

"If you wish to see nature fair and virginal as a bride, go thither some spring day; if you want to solace the bleeding wounds of your heart, return in the late days of autumn."

—THE LILY OF THE VALLEY



From *The Curé of Tours,* the "desert of stones" around the cathedral of Tours.



Balzac's bedroom in the Château of Saché





For a 1980 renovation of a c. 1725 North Carolina room, *opposite,* curators commissioned a painted floorcloth from artist Stephen Gemberling. *Left:* The parlor-chamber of the Dutch-Colonial Jan Martense Schenck House, built in Brooklyn about 1675. Both rooms, Brooklyn Museum.

THE PERIOD ROOM RECONSIDERED

A House & Garden Symposium

EDITED BY ELAINE GREENE PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK DARLEY

What is the purpose of a period room—to advance decorative-arts scholarship? To teach social history? To entertain the casual visitor? Do multiple purposes conflict? How close can we come to a re-creation of a room centuries old? Should it look new, as it originally did, or like a worn, old room that somehow survived? Why have so many American period rooms been restyled in the past decade? These were some of the questions we asked when we invited eight distinguished curators and museum directors to meet with a group of House & Garden editors. They gave us the latest news in a field in which there is much productive ferment.

In a funny way museum period rooms were asleep for about 25 years. Only in the past ten years or so has there suddenly been a renewed interest. —DIANNE H. PILGRIM

LOUIS GROPP, *Editor-in-Chief, House & Garden*
To get us started this afternoon, we thought we might get a sense of what each of you is currently working on and how much rethinking you perceive. I'll begin with you, Dianne, because you just finished doing over some period rooms.

DIANNE H. PILGRIM, *Curator, Department of Decorative Arts, The Brooklyn Museum*
The Brooklyn Museum has 28 American period rooms, and we have just spent eight years renovating the 21 original rooms first opened to the public in 1929.
We started this project for a lot of reasons. Essentially the rooms had not been touched since the 1940s. They still had their twenties beaverboard ceilings, which were sagging, and a lot of dirt. And we realized that there had been many historical inaccuracies in the rooms. We reopened the first group of period rooms, fourteen of them, in 1980, and the last seven in October 1984.
In a funny way museum period rooms were asleep for about 25 years. Only in the past ten years or so has there suddenly been a renewed interest. As I said in my lecture at the symposium The Brooklyn Museum held when we opened the last group of seven rooms, I think that our era may eventually become known as the era of the floor cloth.
When there was a lot of interest in the 1940s in period rooms, you saw Oriental carpets on many of the floors now under floorcloths. Each time curators redo a room, we think we are that much closer to the truth. Well, you know, 25 years from now they are going to look back at the rooms we have just done and they are going to say, "Oh, don't they look like the 1970s and '80s?" It is very hard to get away from the taste of your own time.

When you look at our field in comparison with astronomy, for example, you see that we are just beginning to understand what is going on. —CHARLES F. HUMMEL

GROPP: Mr. Hummel, I would like to move to you next. I see a distinction being made between what people call a "real period room" and what they call a "Winterthur period room."

CHARLES F. HUMMEL, *Deputy Director for Collections, Winterthur Museum and Gardens*
I think that what you see is correct, but I would not refer to a "Winterthur period room" because at Winterthur in the past twenty years we have referred to "period settings" and "period galleries" rather than "period rooms" in the historic sense. I think that we have been very conscious of the difference, being a teaching museum and a training center for graduate students since a year after the museum was opened to the public in 1951.
What has been happening at Winterthur for the past fifteen to eighteen years is that we have been walking a fine line between the period settings of the 1940s and 1950s seen by the public in the museum Mr. du Pont created and the historical research uncovered by staff and students in the graduate programs. We have made a number of changes in those period-room settings, when it is feasible, to accurately reflect life-style as well as social and cultural history.
For example, when we had completed research for the Pennsylvania German exhibition cosponsored with the Philadelphia Museum of Art a few years ago, we knew that our period settings did not accurately reflect the way the Pennsylvania Germans lived or grouped their furniture. So we set up a correct bed with the kind of bedclothing a Pennsylvania farmer would have used, and moved a cupboard from a parlor into a kitchen where it belonged. But we still do not delude ourselves that we now have proper Pennsylvania German period rooms. Tomorrow one of our research students may come along with a brilliantly written paper indicating that everything

The Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities uses the first Harrison Gray Otis House in Boston (1795–96, architect Charles Bulfinch) as its headquarters and as a historic house museum, *below*. The parlor of the house was refurbished in the early 1970s to reflect the Federal taste. *Opposite:* The Port Royal Entrance Hall at the Winterthur Museum in Delaware is notable for its fine woodwork. The original house was built in 1762 outside Philadelphia.





In major museum settings the period rooms are an impediment, both to the integrity of the objects and to the simple science of getting people through the spaces. If I were designing a new museum wing now, I would never put a period room into it.

—ROBERT F. TRENT

we have in those rooms is inaccurate and incorrect and ought to be replaced.

GROPP: Alice, you recently finished a very important period room for a prestigious institution. What do you think is uniquely 1985 about the Met's Renaissance Revival Parlor?

ALICE COONEY FRELINGHUYSEN, *Assistant Curator, Department of American Decorative Arts, The Metropolitan Museum of Art*
Let me put my answer into perspective. The Metropolitan, like the Brooklyn, has a long history and a long commitment to the period room. The original American Wing opened in 1924, and the period rooms installed at that time were really the core of the Wing. When the new American Wing opened in 1980, many of those original rooms had been reevaluated and to some extent reinstalled. Some are, as Charles [Hummel] called them, essentially period *settings*. During that time of reevaluation, the curators, Marilynn Johnson among them, went out to look for period rooms of the nineteenth century. I think maybe that is one of the key 1980s elements of the Renaissance Revival Parlor I recently installed—this new interest in the late nineteenth century. The present scheme of the American Wing is to complete the chronology through the nineteenth century and up to the beginning of this century with the Frank Lloyd Wright Room of 1912–14, installed in 1983.
At the time the Renaissance Revival Parlor was pulled out of the Meriden, Connecticut, house in 1968, everyone was already aware of the kinds of documentation necessary to put together a period room. The curators had every detail photographed and measured, drawings made, segments removed from ornamented ceilings and plaster cornices to be reproduced, and all the woodwork, doors,



windows, hardware, marble mantelpiece, and even the hearth carefully removed for reinstallation. Paint analysis determined all the myriad original colors in the ceiling, walls, and woodwork.
I know that in our earlier rooms we have none of this documentation. The awareness of the need for documentation is a feature of today's scholarship.

GROPP: Marilyn, it sounds as if you left the Met to train those students who are going to be challenging the work of the museums.

MARILYNN JOHNSON, *Chairman, Department of Museum Studies, Graduate Division, Fashion Institute of Technology*
Well, actually I have *returned* to the academic world, teaching this time in the new graduate program in Museum Studies at FIT, which is part of the State University of New York system. While I was a decorative-arts curator at the Met, I was also at Columbia teaching in the Historic Preservation graduate program.
We ought to note that the American concept of the "total room" as a work of art came out of the 1870s and '80s, the period of the Aesthetic Movement and the beginnings of the Colonial Revival, which was also the time of the establishment of great personal art collections and of museums to house public collections. It's a short history.
In academia and in museums today, we are aware of the need to document because we came to know what we lacked from the past, and this is no disparagement of what our predecessors did. It means there is always a continuum of questioning and learning more and questioning again.

PILGRIM: In fairness to other museums, which lacked Brooklyn's very early interest in architectural correctness, I think it is important to realize that in the teens and the twenties, when museums were acquiring period rooms, they really saw them as a stage set, a backdrop for furniture. There wasn't the concern we have today with historical and architectural preservation.
Because of the peculiar and particular interest in architecture of Luke Vincent Lockwood, appointed to my museum's board of governors in 1914, the rooms in Brooklyn, with very few exceptions, could be picked up and put back into the original houses. We have a room from the Joseph Russell house in Providence, Rhode Island, which dates to about 1772. We bought two rooms and a hallway from that house in 1922, and we sold one of the rooms to the Minneapolis Institute of Art and the hallway to the Denver Art Museum.
I went to Minneapolis about five years ago and was dumbfounded because, first of all, the Russell room there is about one-third larger than our room. Yet they were identical in the original house. There was something else

Out went the large dining table, out went hundreds of pieces of silver. And in went a pantry. I thought it was a stunning room. As it turned out, it created an absolute furor. Any time you deal with a building like the Governor's Palace or Mount Vernon, buildings that are sacred cows, people have to get acclimatized. —BROCK JOBE



A Moorish room from the early 1880s, *opposite,* was preserved intact when John D. Rockefeller's New York brownstone was demolished to make way for the garden of The Museum of Modern Art. The interior designer, George Schastey, was a pioneer in that emergent profession. The taste for such exotica was also new, as was the room's unified style.
Right: William and Mary paneling from the Trippe House, 1724–31, Dorchester County, Maryland. Both rooms, Brooklyn Museum.



HENRY BOWLES

The last room at Bayou Bend that the collector Ima Hogg furnished, *above,* contains the only parlor set by John Henry Belter (New York, 1855) to survive with its bill of sale. Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. *Below:* Winterthur's Port Royal Parlor is a treasury of Philadelphia Chippendale furniture. *Opposite:* In 1981 the Butler's Pantry in the Governor's Palace at Colonial Williamsburg was the first room in that building to be renovated according to its 1770 inventory.



If we consider furniture as art, certainly interior architecture is art as well. And if we don't install period rooms, where would one install period architecture in a museum?

—ALICE COONEY FRELINGHUYSEN

wrong, which took me an hour to figure out—they had put the window walls opposite each other instead of adjacent, as they would have been originally. Now this kind of change was made in museums all over the country to fit into existing spaces and to facilitate visitor traffic patterns. Lockwood would have none of that. And in many cases Lockwood acquired the entire ground floor—he wanted the public to experience what the house was like.

BABS SIMPSON, *Senior Editor, House & Garden*
When did correct, so-called correct, arrangement of furniture begin? In the early rooms did they place the furniture in whatever way they thought was attractive?

JOHNSON: I think that everyone in each stage has felt that they were doing the correct thing, but where you have an individual like Mr. du Pont of Winterthur or Miss Ima Hogg of Bayou Bend, it is slightly different.

DAVID B. WARREN, *Associate Director Collections and Exhibitions, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and Curator of The Bayou Bend Collection*
Well, Miss Hogg never made any pretense of arranging furniture any other way than the way she liked. I asked her when I was fresh out of training at the Winterthur graduate program about doing it correctly, and she said, "Nobody knows how it was originally—I want it the way I like it." And she left it at that.
What we have at Bayou Bend is a 1950s group of period rooms with eighteenth- and nineteenth-century furniture, which in itself may be interesting in time to come.

GROPP: David, I was going to turn to you next, as someone who is dealing with neither a museum setting nor a period house. Could you tell us more about Bayou Bend?

WARREN: We have what Mr. du Pont called a "house museum," not at all a *historic* house museum. Some of it is a 1920s house, some '50s, '60s. There are rooms that are original 1927 John Staub Colonial Revival, with a library based on a room at the Metropolitan's American Wing but somewhat modified. It is a building originally designed to be lived in, then eventually thought of by Miss Hogg as a setting in which to leave her collection intact instead of giving the collection to a museum that would build a wing to put it in. With the exception of some eighteenth-century woodwork, installed as decoration in 1927, our museum is new for the most part.
With my presence and the Winterthur program's influence on me, I think our Belter Parlor—Miss Ima Hogg's last room and my first—probably comes closer to an attempt at a proper nineteenth-century room than any of the others, and we do *(Text continued on page 256)*







ANNES GROVE

Ireland's quintessential Edwardian garden

BY PATRICK BOWE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL GEORGE

One of the most spectacular sights in all Ireland, created by the late Richard Grove Annesley, is an exemplary Robinsonian wild water garden with a mixture of trees worthy of the Douanier Rousseau.



The unexpected quality of the several linked gardens at Annes Grove is exemplified by the miniature world of rock and water which Richard Grove Annesley devised behind high hedges within one of the "rooms" he created in the walled garden. At the center is a pool fringed with hosta, rodgersia, bergenia, and iris and presided over by a weeping silver birch.

How to conserve a garden which in living memory had eight gardeners and now only has three? This is the problem facing Patrick Grove Annesley in conserving his grandfather's garden at Annes Grove, County Cork.

Annes Grove, which has been in the Grove Annesley family since 1628, got its name from the elision of the surnames Annesley and Grove. The house, a tall early-eighteenth-century structure with sunken service courtyards on either side, is surrounded by parkland in the usual eighteenth-century style. Thick belts of beech enclose it, and isolated specimens and clumps of beech, oak, chestnut, and lime provide focal points from the interior. In the tradition of Victorian times, conifers were added, particularly along the drive where they now cast a gloomy shade. A castellated gate-lodge, which was almost certainly the first commission of Benjamin Woodward, Ireland's only Pre-Raphaelite architect, was built in 185 give access to the Dublin road. A walled garden for grow ing fruit, vegetables, and flowers was hidden behind trees to one side. Here was a walk bordered with box-hedged beds, and a grassy mound, or "mount," on which some Victorian ladies of the family had a summerhouse built, which they then decorated with ornamental twigwork, a craft which has almost died out.

This was the property that Richard Grove Annesley inherited in 1900. For over sixty years, until his death in 1966, he created one of the major gardens of Ireland. It is divided into three linked areas: the walled garden, the woodland garden, and the water garden.

It was no longer necessary for the walled garden to fulfill its original function of providing vegetable produce on a large scale, and so a significant part of it could be turned over to the practice of ornamental horticulture. Mr. Grove Annesley set down the greater part of it to lawns and borders. From the gate near the house a path had always run straight across the center between box-



In the wild water garden, tall Lawson cypress in variety punctuate the skyline, while huge clumps of gunnera and skunk cabbage provide a strong definition to the serpentine contours of the River Awbeg. Richard Grove Annesley called in a battalion of soldiers from the neighboring barracks at Fermoy to help in diverting the river and building the waterfalls that dramatize its flow.

hedged beds and rows of Irish yews to the greenhouses. It was the traditional Irish kitchen garden. Mr. Grove Annesley, however, laid out a second path crossing the first and focusing on the Victorian summerhouse. Between this path, paved in local stone, and a background planting of yew hedges, he developed what has become one of the few remaining double herbaceous borders in the country. Herbaceous plants mature quickly and can be changed easily. Old plants die and are replaced with newly obtained species. So the planting in a herbaceous border does not usually remain static. However, many plants in the border at Annes Grove were there in Richard Grove Annesley's day. This gives an unusually old and settled appearance to the borders. Oriental poppies, plume poppies, globe thistles, thalictrum, and waxbells reach four or five feet and give one the impression of walking through a waist-high field of flowers. The climbing nasturtium, *Tropaeolum speciosum,* stains the yew hedges with its scarlet flowers. A pair of tall Lawson cypress 'Erecta Viridis' at the end cleverly conceals the fact that the summerhouse is off-center.

To replace the lines of vegetables and fruit which grew in the borders under the walls, Mr. Grove Annesley arranged separate borders of delphiniums, Michaelmas daisies, agapanthus, and daylilies together with mixed borders of roses, ceanothus, and brooms. Across one of the lawns he erected a rustic pergola now weighed down with honeysuckle, rambling roses, clematis, and autumn-coloring vines. In a hidden enclosure he laid out a masterly landscape in miniature. For the centerpiece he made a waving pool of water, its horizontal line broken by planting a weeping silver birch alongside it. Then thickly edging it with a fringe of hosta, rodgersia, bergenia, astilbe, and iris, he made a miniature rock garden at one end. Now most of the alpines have gone, but the conifers, originally planted as dwarf *(Text continued on page 244)*



One herbaceous border in the walled garden includes blue echinops and white astilbe with arching plumes. *Above:* A rarity in Ireland is the grassy mound, or "mount," at one end of the old walled garden, with a Victorian summerhouse.





Along this drive is a wild woodland garden of rhododendrons, camellias, and other ericaceous plants. *Above:* A rustic pergola in the walled garden supports honeysuckle, rambling rose, clematis, and autumn-coloring vines.





ART NOUVEAU MASTERPIECE

Victor Horta's Hôtel Solvay in Brussels, brought lovingly back to life by the Wittamer-De Camps

BY YOLANDE OOSTENS-WITTAMER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY EVELYN HOFER

On the second-floor landing of the Hôtel Solvay, *opposite,* and throughout the house, the delicacy of Victor Horta's Art Nouveau design for lamps, woodwork, and painted walls is gracefully juxtaposed to the innovative use of exposed steel beams. *Above:* A swirling detail of the stair handrail intertwined with the stem of a light fixture.



The base of a gilded bronze lamp, *this page,* on the first-floor mezzanine. *Opposite:* The grand staircase and its focal point, *La Lecture dans le parc* (1902), by the Belgian painter Théo van Rysselberghe. The painter's wife and daughter are among the several portraits in a setting of the Solvay country estate.







In 1957 my parents, Louis and Berthe Wittamer-De Camps, bought Hôtel Solvay, the Art Nouveau masterwork designed by Victor Horta in Brussels, and saved it from the hands of the developers set to demolish it. After Madame Armand Solvay died in 1952, the family had tried to interest the state in making the house a museum but to no avail.

In the 1950s Art Nouveau was generally regarded with disdain, and the arguments against purchasing the property were so exaggerated that my parents finally chose to ignore them. Of course, the house had been unoccupied for five years, the furniture was draped with dust sheets, and the great stained-glass skylight above the staircase had been shattered by a bomb blast in 1944.

Despite all this, my parents saw many things they liked. Horta's original furniture and extremely useful built-in cabinets were largely intact. My father, noting the ease with which one ascended the central staircase, compared its proportions to a model supplied by a friend, Jean Charles Moreux, the late architect-in-chief of the Palais Nationaux of France, and found that the two matched. The woodwork everywhere was perfectly preserved, and the air was fresh, not stale, although the only part of the house that had been open during a period of several years was a caretaker's apartment on the ground floor. Air quality had long been a prerequisite for my parents in their search for a new location for their haute couture studios. Here the air, the light, and the very rhythm of the interior spaces had subtle qualities that were invigorating.

The construction of the Hôtel Solvay began in 1895, during a time of intense imitation of all past styles—Gothic, Renaissance, Classical—but Horta resolutely set himself to listen to his own time: "Architects have been taught of all the beauties of styles from the past,"

An enfilade of three salons runs along the front of the house on the second floor. Here, from the billiards room, a view of the drawing room and the music room. All furniture in the house was designed by Horta and is intact.





he said, "but instead of discovering therein . . . a source of confidence in the inexhaustible fertility of the human intellect when it is in gestation for the needs of a new society . . . thought has been led astray by the notion that nothing better can be achieved, there is nothing left to do but to imitate."

In 1886, Horta had built three townhouses in Ghent. Their success was immediate but he remained doubtful.

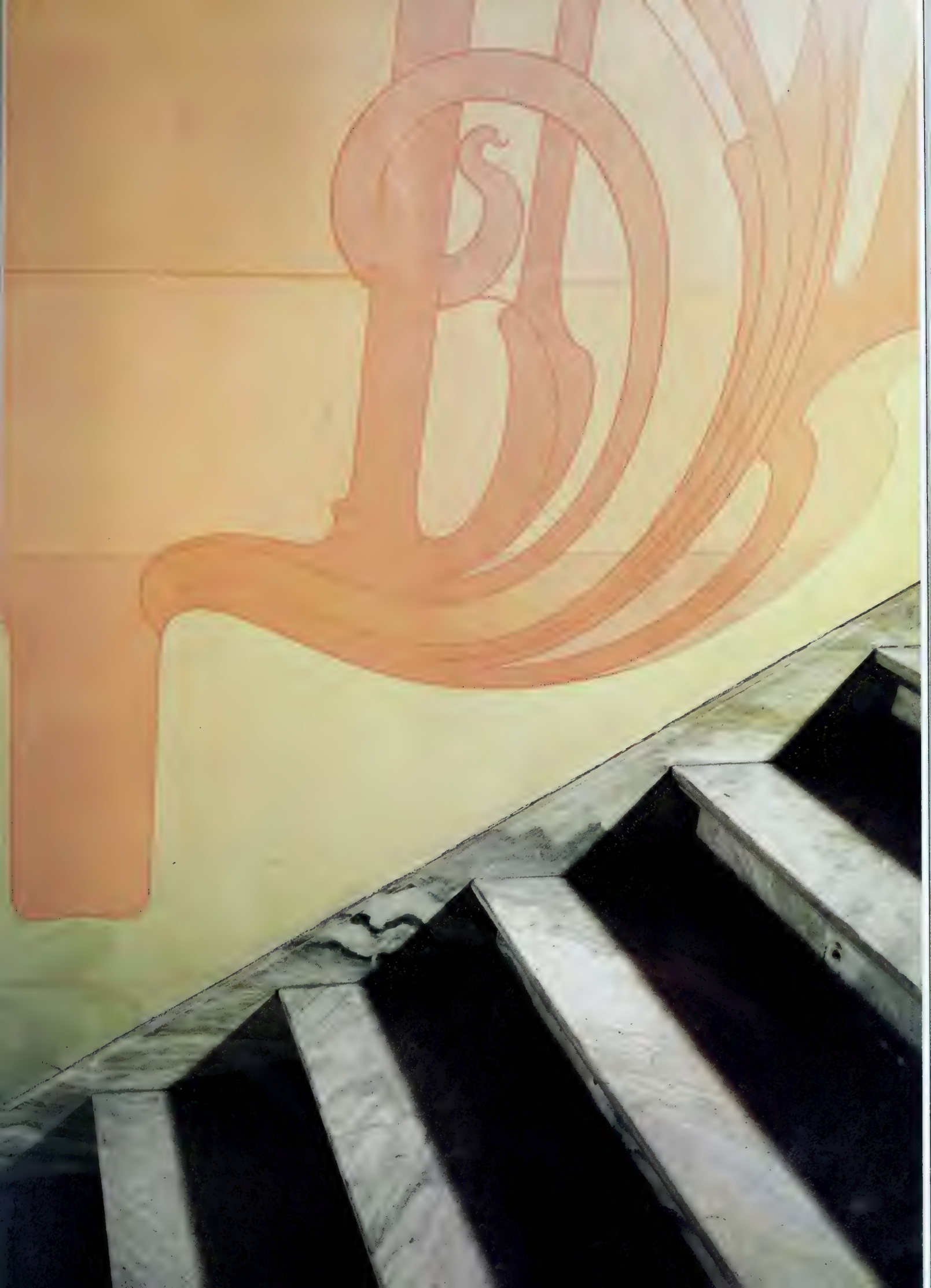
"The too great success achieved by my work showed me that the work was neither as powerful nor as new as the inspiration which I had sought. So with my friends' disapproval, I called a halt to a success which I thought too easily gotten, and I returned industriously to Balat's office."

Eight years later, at the time of his meeting with Armand Solvay, Horta was 33 years old and felt certain of his revolutionary ideas. Solvay, who was 29, newly married, and a director of his family's international industrial concern, understood this and, not being a man for half-measures, gave Horta a free hand. The architect created everything, from the concept of the space to every detail of décor: furniture, carpets, lighting fixtures, and door handles.

The main building sits at 224 avenue Louise in Brussels; behind it lies a small garden leading to another building, 27 rue Lens, which contains an apartment, garages, stables for three horses, a tack room, and a carriage room. The house is a large structure, with six floors above street level and one below, designed to accommodate the life-style of the *haute bourgeoisie* at the time. Though the building permit was granted in August 1895, and the construction approved by the city services three years later, many details of the décor continued to be added until March 1903.

Each level has its distinct characteristics. The *sous-sol,* a full basement, has numerous *(Text continued on page 242)*

Along the stairs, *opposite,* leading to the conservatory, a play of swirls. *Above left:* The dining room. *Left:* The second-floor landing, whose steel frame ceiling was all that remained after the bombing of World War II. The Wittamers were able to restore the glass vaulting. On either side of the landing, the glass partitions open up.





Philippe Wolfers's *La Fée au paon*, now in the entry hall, was not originally in the house. *Right:* The master bathroom, with everything, including the brass- and glass towel rack, by Horta.



(*Continued from page 238*) storage rooms; Horta's departure from the ordinary was that he did not place the kitchen here. Instead, he put it on the ground floor, on the garden side, where it's adjacent to both the service staircase and the main central stairway; the latter is flanked on the avenue side by a study and a cloakroom. A carriage drive along the north wall allowed vehicles to pull up to the main doorway.

On the *bel étage,* or second-floor reception area, three salons are across the stairway from a dining room that has a broad terrace overlooking the garden. From here, the staircase ascends to a stained-glass plant conservatory, which serves as the focal point of the third floor—the parents' floor—with the studies of Armand Solvay and his wife, Fanny, their bedroom and attached dressing room, the children's study, and the family breakfast room. The fourth floor has bedrooms for the children and their governess.

Above the next floor of small rooms is the attic, which is largely glassed-in in order to provide sunlight for the house's two light wells and their stained-glass domes and partitions. Between the floors proper are mezzanines, which contain a pantry, a cloakroom, a bathroom, and a linen room.

From the start Horta knew that if he wanted to create the fluid and luminous interior he envisioned, he would have to resolve two difficulties inherent in the site. The staircase, a potential obstacle, had to be transformed into an open and livable space; and natural light had to be brought into the very heart of the building. In Horta's view, the greatest luxury that he could provide for his clients would be ample light and air: *Mens sana in corpore sano* is an adage for which he felt professional responsibility.

To accomplish this, a change in structure was called for. Traditional masonry did not offer sufficient mechanical possibilities for opening up the interior space. Horta therefore decided upon a steel framework mixed with masonry and glass; he left the steel beams exposed and allowed them to set the basic rhythm of the interior. He also chose a plan centered around the staircase, and it is here in the ground-



The plant conservatory on the third floor

floor reception hall that one immediately becomes aware of the role of the staircase in the air conditioning and heating of the house; fresh air, piped from the garden, continuously flows from the apertures hidden by the upper part of the sofas. This air is ushered into the room by the concave shape of the two intrados (the under-arches of the staircase). In cold weather the air is heated on its way in by hidden heat exchangers beneath the landing floor, that is, the raised ceiling of the furnace room.

As the axis of traffic under the sparkling mixture of natural light entering from the roof, front, and rear of the house, the staircase is also a focal point of Horta's design. Strong straight lines introduced here by the exposed steel structure find a counterpoint in vigorous curves. The dynamic juxtaposition of these two elements is exemplified at the foot of the central staircase in the wonderful handrail; not only here but throughout the house the play of one against the other has an especially lyrical quality. The curves also provide a certain visual transition from one architectural element to another.

When Horta was working on the details of décor he had his craftsmen first model in plaster the most complex elements. The same procedure was used for chairs: the architect had a prototype made and tested it for comfort before authorizing its execution. Like the plan of house itself, all lines are governed by proportions based upon geometry. Horta's basic unit of design in the Solvay house was the square and its diagonal (with the size of the square varying according to the requirements of a given spot). Complementary colors for the house were introduced with the staircase: green for the *bel étage* and salmon for the upper floors.

Many different types of wood and marble were selected for their pattern and coloring. Thus, the linear, graphic quality of Swiss cipolin cut *across* the grain is perfect for covering the intrados of the first flight of stairs, while the mottled, shot-silk effect of the same stone cut *along* the grain is used on the treads of the same staircase. The woods came from Europe, the Americas, and Africa, and some still have not been identified. Horta went to great lengths to find them: the dark inlaid flooring of the dining room is bubinga, which was not commercially available at the time of construction—it was obtained from King Leopold II's explorations in Africa.

From the beginning, Horta had intended to complete his work with powerful accents, and to this end he called upon painters and sculptors, including Théo van Rysselberghe, who in his large Neo-Impressionist canvas *La Lecture dans le parc* was careful not to have his painting clash with the surrounding coloration and to work with the existing play of shadow and sunlight.

Responding to their growing interest in Belgian Art Nouveau, my parents expanded their collections and helped save archives that they have lent to more than two hundred exhibitions to date. The Hôtel Solvay testifies to many noble aims, and in recent years increasing support has come forth from individuals and institutions both in Belgium and abroad. At the moment, a long-term plan is being worked on to preserve the house not only as a monument but also as a center of research with an ongoing program. A secure future for the Hôtel Solvay will be a tribute to the many people whose concern has helped to safeguard this masterpiece that established Horta as one of the fathers of modern architecture. □

Translated by John A. Gray Jr. Editor: Gaetana Enders

The Hôtel Solvay can be seen on a limited basis by written appointment to Mr. and Mrs. Louis Wittamer, 224 avenue Louise, 1050 Brussels, Belgium.

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(Continued from page 229) specimens, have spread to cover the whole area.

Behind the house is a limestone gorge of dramatic outline and form. Along the near rim traveled the drive from the Dublin road, its route designed to gain maximum value from the views of the woodland and gorge below. In the 1920s a vein of acid soil was discovered along this drive, and Richard Grove Annesley realized that he could grow rhododendrons, camellias, and other ericaceous plants, which his otherwise limy soil had hitherto prevented him from doing. Attracted first by their color, he began to plant showy Victorian rhododendron hybrids like the *Rhododendron* 'Cornish Red' and those bred by the English nursery Waterers'. Then encouraged by Sir Frederick Moore, recently retired as director of the Botanic Gardens at Glasnevin, Dublin, he began also to plant wild species. It was the time of the great plant hunters—Wilson, Sargent, Forrest, and Kingdon-Ward—who ventured into the interior of China and the Himalayas to bring back to our gardens the wonderful, and as yet undiscovered, plants that grew in those regions. Frank Kingdon-Ward in 1924 was making up a syndicate of garden owners and directors to finance an expedition to the Himalayas. He offered them a proportion of the seed he collected according to the number of shares they bought in his expedition. Sir Frederick Moore, who had already persuaded Glasnevin to take shares, encouraged Mr. Grove Annesley to do likewise. So he subscribed to the first of many Kingdon-Ward expeditions.

Like many subscribers, he must have waited with eager anticipation the seed that Kingdon-Ward would bring back from those remote regions. In the meantime, Kingdon-Ward sent reports of his progress. One of these, still at Annes Grove, sends the bad news of the murder of his mail runner; another details his difficulties in entering Tibet, the authorities fearing the party to be spies. The letters indicate the hazardous nature of these journeys as well as the excitement of the discoveries. On Kingdon-Ward's return, Mr. Grove Annesley received his share of the seed. Success was variable but it was possible to trade off the successes with other subscribers.

As the rhododendron garden developed, the Dublin drive was closed to wheeled traffic so that it could become the principal walk. It serpentines elegantly through the trees, amid bold groups of Chinese and Himalayan rhododendrons. *Rhododendron decorum, R. yunnanense,* and *R. cerasinum* with flowers of white, blush, and scarlet, respectively, are some of those introduced by Kingdon-Ward. There are also many colorful *R. cinnabarinum* and *R. Griersonianum.* No rhododendrons have been used more for breeding new hybrids, many of which are grown at Annes Grove close to their parents, and it is interesting to compare parents and offspring. In among the shrubs are some fine trees, including the drooping juniper (*Juniperus recurva*), an immense willow leaf podocarp (*Podocarpus salignus*), and fine specimens of Wilson's and Watson's magnolias.

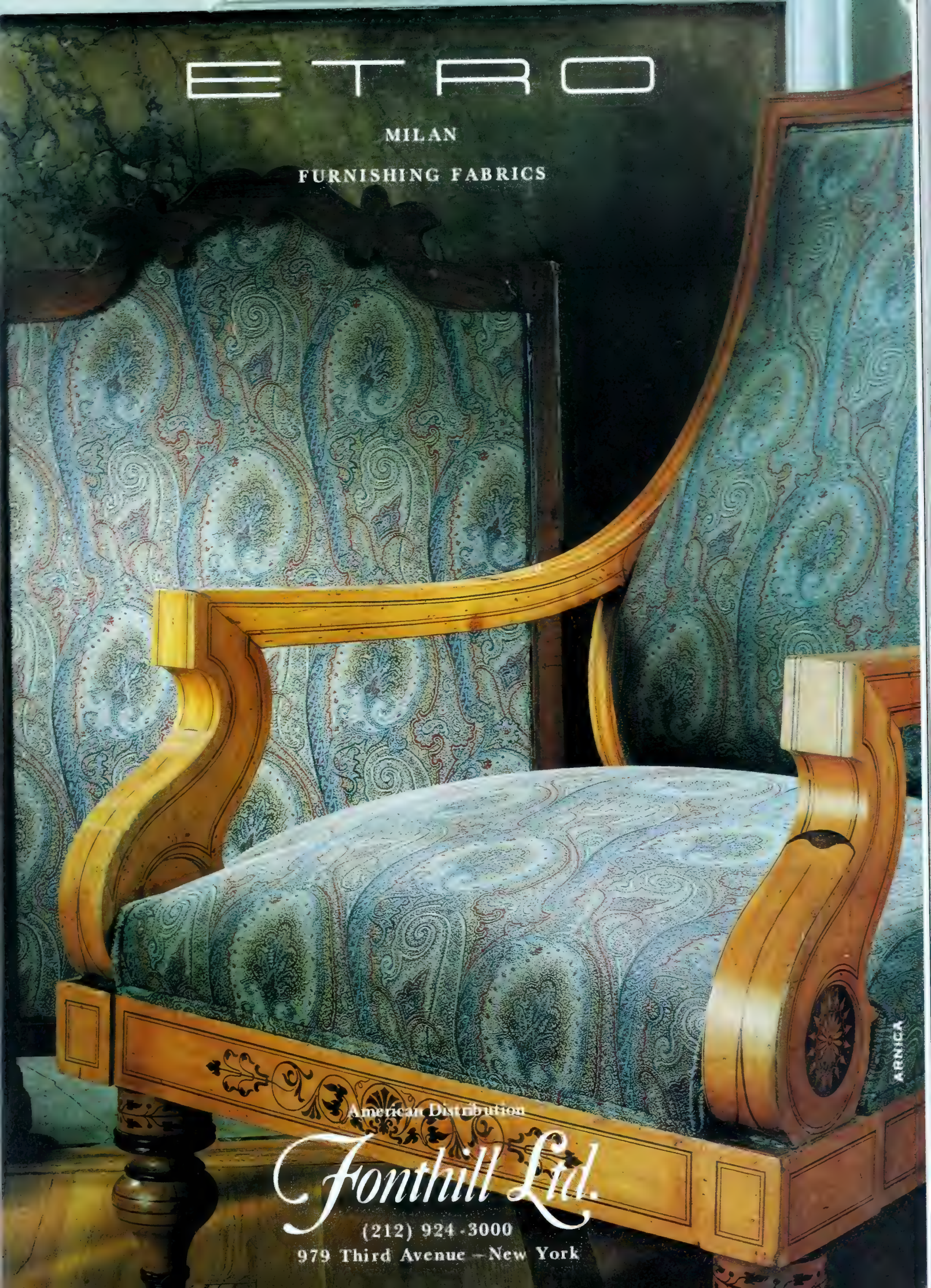
The third of the linked gardens is the water garden on the valley floor. Before Richard Grove Annesley began, there was not even a path down to this area. The River Awbeg, its beauties sung by the Elizabethan poet Edmund Spenser, who began work on *The Faerie Queene* at nearby Kilcolman Castle, flowed quietly at the bottom. Grove Annesley first had the river diverted, using a battalion of soldiers from the nearby army barracks at Fermoy, so that it flowed nearer and within view of the house. When doing so, he had a number of weirs and rapids made to break the water's flow. Early on, as is always wise, he planted trees, tall Lawson cypress in variety, which make soaring spires against the sky today, and water-loving poplar and willow along the riverbank. Their light foliage flickers in summer breezes and the willow's stems glow with warm color in the low winter sunlight.

He then planted long reaches of bamboo by the waterside as background and shelter for the smaller plants. (Unfortunately these died in the winter of 1981–82, necessitating their removal by the thousand. Their death highlights the problem of maintenance in a historic garden and poses a creative challenge to the present generation.) Huge clumps of gunnera accentuate the bends in the river. Along the banks between, high color is given by long drifts of astilbe, rodgersia, daylilies, and, later, hydrangeas, as well as bistorts and Australian flax. One dramatic patch of yellow is an enormous bed of *Primula Florindae* growing in mud. This candelabra primula, introduced by Kingdon-Ward, was called by him after his wife, Florinda. The maintenance of this uniquely large patch requires considerable effort, for the plants must be constantly lifted and divided to keep them healthy.

The conservation of this extensive garden on many different levels has required careful thought. For example, although many new paths have been opened up, the plantings have been deliberately allowed to grow a little wilder. Its essence has been maintained, however, and in many ways the change has resulted in an increased romanticism and a greater contrast with the more meticulously maintained walled and woodland gardens.

William Donnellan, the last of the dedicated gardeners who worked under Richard Grove Annesley's personal direction, has recently retired. Two new gardeners of a much younger generation have started work under the supervision of Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Grove Annesley. There has been extensive planting by Patrick Grove Annesley in the woodland garden of many young rhododendrons propagated from his grandfather's original plantings, and in sunny niches on the limestone cliff above the river the Grove Annesleys are now putting in Mediterranean plants (that is, clumps of cistus) collected on occasional expeditions to the mountains of Crete.

The garden is now open to the public five days a week during the season. Despite this and the building of a new car park, discreetly placed, Annes Grove remains very much a family garden and retains that atmosphere of quiet but beautiful seclusion for which, after all, gardens are created. □


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(Continued from page 186) What makes the image even more compelling is the titillating contrast between base and house, bringing to mind such precedents of similar excitement and memorable architectural experience as the Villa dei Vescovi, by Falconetto, and Cerreto Guidi, the Medici villa by Bernardo Buontalenti, with its enormous brick base and access ramps leading to the platform on which the white villa is situated.

The contrasts in this house are even more pronounced because they are not just the contrasts of materials and details, but of characteristics of built form. Campi and Pessina juxtapose mass and frame, the archetypal architectural ideas of cave and hut. The extraordinary tactile quality of the stone wall exists as counterpoint to the utterly smooth quality of the white stucco frame and glass. A closer examination of the base wall reveals a discrete, slightly projecting frame of pilasters and arches that order the wall rhythmically and suggest the existence of large buttresses, or tunnel-like voids, penetrating the slope of the hill. Such architectural motifs, found throughout the house, can be read as clues to its complexity and richness of experience.

The vertical marking of the entrance gate signals the existence of a two-story-high, almost streetlike courtyard cut into the base. Directly from the road one enters this very long, narrow space of white, smooth stuccoed walls and feels immediately to be now in the main part of the house. A small bridge crosses the gap directly behind the gates connecting the garage and service and guest rooms with the house. From this bridge, through an oculus over the gate, the servants can easily observe the road and the entrance. The visitor in the narrow courtyard space focuses on a three-story curved glass-block screen containing the main entrance door. A polished black-and-white checkerboard marble floor is overlaid by a strip of concrete steps that lead like a rolled-out carpet to the front door. The finely divided glass-block screen allows a faint view of the stair hall, suggesting that the space of the entrance court extends through the house.



Looking up from lowest level one sees the wall opening that marks the central axis of the house, aligning the fireplace, the eight columns of living room and stair, and the dining room.

On entering the house proper, one follows a path through a vestibule to a major flight of stairs, which ends on an intermediate landing. This marks the place for the owners of the house to receive guests. Appropriately the elevator entrance and coat and powder rooms are located at this intermediate level, which also serves as a distribution point for private circulation to the guest rooms, servant's quarters, and garage. Service to the house functions discretely and unobtrusively. It is also at this level that one gains the first view of the two-story-high living room and the uniquely enclosed dining area, where the special ambience of the house begins. The architects make this explicit by clearly treating the first landing as part of the ground, while the beautifully detailed, freestanding sculptural stair ascends, as if magically suspended, to the living areas.

The movement to the main floor unfolds a cubist interplay of solids and voids within a two-story-high volume carved out of the center of the house and its three-dimensional grid of columns and beams. Just as the stair acts as a detached sculptural event in the space, a room at the bedroom level, serving as a special retreat for the owner, occupies the center of the space. It is clearly detached from the enclosing surfaces of the space, and hovers, as if suspended, like a baldacchino above the main ceiling area of the living room. To heighten the effect even further, Campi and Pessina join and contrast the open, expansive center space with an intimate, low windowless inglenook, restating the primary spatial theme of the house: cave and hut.

In architectural terms the main house, consisting essentially of a glass-enclosed structural frame of rectangular columns and beams, is interrupted by a two-story void. Into this void the architects have put a separate and dimensionally different structural system with round columns. The round columns introduce a space within a space and, since they fill three bays in a seven-bay house, place a special emphasis on their own center, logically occupied by the living area and the suspended room. A round-column system within the primary square-column grid constitutes another deliberate formal juxtaposition. Square columns imply static, carefully defined space, whereas round columns suggest a dynamic composition of space appropriate for all the plastic events within the house.

Unlike many modern houses in the United States, this building demonstrates a high degree of intellectual and artistic restraint. The architects do not try to make the entire house a piece of architectural sculpture. The exterior of the house proper is a simple, precise volume of almost classical proportions. Spatial complexity is confined strictly to the public areas of the house, allowing the other parts to serve as background and frame. By finding the proper tension and balance between architecture as art and architecture as shelter, Campi and Pessina imbue the very romantic idea of house with special layers of meaning. □

Editor: Elizabeth Sverbeyeff Byron

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SELENE

(Continued from page 217) left him last, he was hastening toward the consolations of heaven. And, sitting among the benignities of that high seat, might not he have grown a few centimeters more in the direction of worldly wisdom and have looked down with as much wicked joy as is available to a saintly ghost when he watched the Germans rubble the bridge he had limped across on the road of exile from his Eden, with the sparks from Mademoiselle Gamard's fiery sword still smoldering in his cassock?

Balzac himself could scarcely have cherished acuter longings for his birthplace than to have it simply disappear. Henry James was fortunate enough to have his chance for the disillusionment of seeing that sacred precinct before it was blown beyond earthly vision, and he confessed to being "shocked a little to find that [Balzac] was born in a house 'in a row'—a house, moreover, which at the date of his birth, must have been only about 20 years old. All that is contradictory. If the tenement selected for this honor could not be ancient and embrowned, it should at least have been detached."

Tours would never go so far as to describe the Balzacs as *parvenus* because it could never quite think of them as *arrivées*. His mother came here newly married from a family of Paris drapers, and she in no way abated provincial distrusts by settling into a carelessly concealed alliance with Jean de Margonne, squire of a manor at Saché.

Her eldest son would occupy himself tirelessly counterfeiting *gueules* on a dim family escutcheon. The percentage of the multitude of his characters who were transmutations of himself is past precise calculation, and all of them are slender of figure and equipped with sisters who are marquises and with names traceable to the Crusades. He was an insatiable collector of duchesses, and the most valued of the *objets trouvés* in the hardwood cabinet of his heart had been ennobled by the emperor Napoleon with a patent distinctly fresher than her complexion. When he had painfully struggled to the threshold of marriage to the Countess Hanska—by no means the first titled lady to accept his embraces but the only one to consider taking his name—he wrote to his sister:

> Listen, Laure, isn't it something to have it in one's power, just for wishing, to create a society where only the elite of society will meet, ruled by a woman with the polish and elegance of a queen, high-born, educated, a woman of wealth and beauty. I have sought nothing else for eighteen years. If the *Comédie humaine* does not make a great man of me, this achievement will.

To tarry at Tours with no signature more impressive than Balzac's upon one's letters of introduction is soon enough to feel an uptilting of noses; and to linger longer is to commence to understand that we and he may not have been snubbed altogether undeservedly. For Tours embodies the cast of mind that has no politics that were not destroyed in the eighteenth century, when the spirit of proper reverence for order and sensible preference for comfort was turned with dizzying suddenness into the prey and toy of the winds: a house of deputies blew a king away, a committee of public safety blew the deputies away, a directory blew the committee of public safety away, and an emperor blew the directory away, and then the emperor was blown away and back came a king. Even so, the disorders of his national history so shook Balzac's cradle that ever afterward he clung tightly to royalist principles. But no end of genuflection to the orthodox could earn him acceptance from Tours, since ultra-Legitimist though he tried to be, he nonetheless incarnated energies that are revolutionary in spite of themselves. Those huffings and puffings, those showerings of still-hot cinders, those accompaniments of clangor marked him as one of those steam engines that were symbol and signal of the nineteenth century's assault upon provincial tranquillities and traditions.

After a while the pilgrim accepts and even honors his rejection and is driven, as if by a chastening wind, more and more often down the rue de la Scellerie, past the site of the *lycée* where the small Balzac first conned his primer—now a shop whose specialty is the erotic videocassette—to wander leperlike in the regions of the cathedral, that "desert of stones. . . [that] arid spot, which could only be inhabited by beings who had either attained to absolute nullity, or were gifted with abnormal strength of soul."

After his bivouac in the desert, nothing is left for the repulsed besieger except to withdraw his pickets and fall back on the countryside around him. One line of retreat runs south through Joué-lès-Tours and passages dingy with textile and tire mills but then unexpectedly redeemed by a great swathe of green unashamedly blazing that most unfamiliar and life-restoring of devices: "Parc Honoré *de* Balzac." We travel at last on the road at whose end there will be no further need for the addicted to apologize, and, all snubs forgotten, we can with proper pride, hasten toward the château at Saché where Balzac's ghost is fitly settled in the refuge that so often harbored him in flight from Paris and his creditors.

Saché might not seem so blessed a sanctuary if Tours had not so pitilessly conditioned us to bless any sanctuary within reach. Still its welcome has a warmth singular among shelters for the homeless. The works achieved and the scraps of schemes—quite often surprisingly sound ones—gone awry are arrayed in their glass cases with a tidiness somehow more compelling and more poignant just for being so un-Balzacian. To room with Balzac has always been to resign yourself to sleeping on the sheets and blankets he insists on rumpling and tossing about. Saché has made the bed at last; its billows are all smoothed out, and there are undreamt-of rewards in this chance to observe in peace the wonderful weave of the bedspread that he usually displayed to us by balling it up and throwing it across the room.

The lands around Saché never make their entrance into the Balzacian canon in a key other than the idyllic. "Would it be possible to tire of this beautiful valley?" the Woman of Thirty asks, and our duty-bound reply is, "Of course not." But even as we serve it up and unwearied as we remain, the suspicion will not down that those who find in the valley of the Loire no enjoyments beyond those undeflected may have missed its ultimate gift, which is to awaken what Stendhal calls "the somber joys of the melancholy heart."



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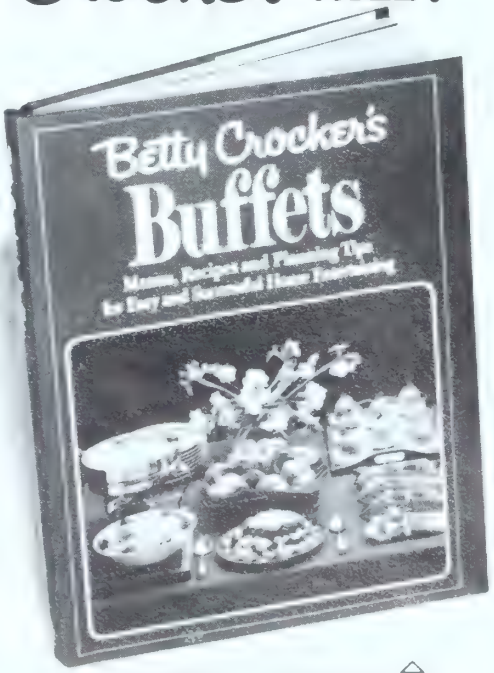
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RANDOM HOUSE

One walks the Indre in autumn among the falling leaves, contemplates the moss on the roofs of idled mills, and reflects upon the unslakable fertility of damp rot until these scenes almost start to resound with intimations of old, unhappy, far-off thoughts. There is no further resistance to the inference that Balzac might have endured worse times here than he pretends and that he was by no means often enough immune to "those comparisons between provincial and Parisian life" he assigns as Lucien de Rumbempré's "most urgent motive for suicide."

That more-than-slightly rancid shepherd's hymn *The Lily of the Valley* is his most fevered testament to the indubitably fair prospect beneath his window at Saché. Most of *The Lily of the Valley* seems to have been written not here but in Paris, a provenance suggestive of sojourns tenderer as memory than as experience.

What he did write at Saché was *Le Père Goriot,* that Everest of protractedly bitter thought. There had to have been a few dishes in life by the Indre that worked to fortify any rage or proportions this titanic, and they lie within convenient reach of our guesses. His host was Jean de Margonne, who had been his mother's lover, and his hostess was the wife Margonne had taken with no passion more purposeful than the expansion of his farmlands.

Margonne was more squire than nobleman, as Saché is more manor house than château. We tend to think of nineteenth-century French hereditary proprietors in conditions of unremitting ease; instead most of them had been near ruined in the Revolution and worked themselves almost as cruelly as their tenants when the Restoration gave them a chance to recover.

Margonne's habits were the sun's—he rose at 6:00 A.M. in the winter and 3:30 in the summer—and the quieties celebrated in Balzac's letter to Paris could only have been paltrier and less frequent in the doing than in the telling. Madame de Margonne was pinched by nature and could hardly in fairness be expected to draw inspiration for expanding herself from the company of a guest whose name and person incessantly reminded her that her husband's affections had been more generously distributed elsewhere than at home.

Worst of all, the environs could not offer so much as one of those angels with wings a trifle soiled and singed from more-than-occasional descents to earth that were a diet essential to Balzac's delusions of Woman as repository of the Ideal and Grand.

Instead of *a* Madame de Montsauf, he had only *the* Madame de Margonne; and he may have been better off with that deprivation, for it is perhaps from her constricted and blighted person that he drew his triumph with Madame Vauquer, mistress of the pension where Rastignac met Old Goriot and both met the Vautrin stranded there like Grant at Galena.

And then there is a sparsity close to meanness in the furnishings of Madame de Margonne's salon that encourages the beholder to believe Madame Meyer, our guide, when she says that Balzac is sometimes thought to have borrowed them to fit out the parlor of the Maison Vauquer, "than which nothing could be more depressing." As for Margonne, he has ended up with an identity as model for Eugénie Grandet's monomaniacally miserly father and for the cankered, half-seas-over Monsieur de Montsauf, husband of the Lily of the Valley. To entertain Honoré de Balzac was to be for a while vastly entertained and to be forever afterward vastly punished.

One visitor's mind begins to wander while Madame Meyer discourses with a fluency as charming as it is wondrous in a tongue lost on the majority of her audience that has come to Saché from foreign parts. The thought occurs that most cults, including Balzac's, breed their most intense devotees in alien climates, which may be why so many gurus travel so far from India and stay away so long. We can always be trusted to prostrate ourselves the more ardently the less we understand the language of the rite.

But then incomprehension is the mother of comfort. By now the mind has rather lost touch with Madame Meyer and arrives in its errant course at Vouvray from whose vines Eugénie Grandet's father squeezed so large a part of the riches he guarded as a secret even from her. Vouvray had been one point in the excursions of an undisciplined gadding-about, and it had produced that most-unthought-of of unthinkabilities, a statue of the illustrious Gaudissart, the least plausible of selections as the one actor in the entire comedy to be memorialized in the open air anywhere in Touraine. Gaudissart was the traveling salesman who came to Vouvray to gull its peasants and was duly and severely gulled in return. He had been drawn as a figure of sport and mockery, and yet there his statue stands, poor likeness of our own preconceptions though it may be, attesting itself in all solemnity as a tribute from the Society of Traveling Salesmen and Merchants of Touraine.The long span of Touraine's inattention had in this instance been interrupted by a gesture of homage, and, in the breach as in the habit, what had again expressed itself was Touraine's persistence in the misunderstanding of Balzac.

The ear returns to our guide, and she is descanting at length upon the high birth and the extensive Polish properties of the Countess Hanska, who put off marrying Balzac until he gave every promise of dying with dispatch. She need not be blamed for the coincidence: to be wife to Balzac would have meant a term of being a rather equivocal presence, but to be Balzac's widow could with luck mean to be a distinguished one. And *that* the former Countess Hanska is, as the ghostly chatelaine of Saché. And who could judge which of these two shades rejoices most to hear the long litanies that are chanted to her ten times a day? The cup of these special pleasures is probably at equal flow for both: she had her high-birthed heart's desire, a measure of immortality, and he has his bursting head's, a great marriage. His true glories are but accessories to this one; and we have arrived, at last, at the vision of this ghost who drowses only half-heeding the guide's references to the work and then awakes to concentrated rapture when she unveils the panoply of the real and personal properties of the Countess Hanska. She was the success that mattered most to him, satisfaction only an arm's length from the absolute and short of it only because Tours had not bothered to notice even this. □

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ON VIEW

Current exhibitions not to be missed



Komar and Melamid, *Nostalgic View of the Kremlin from Manhattan* (1981–82)

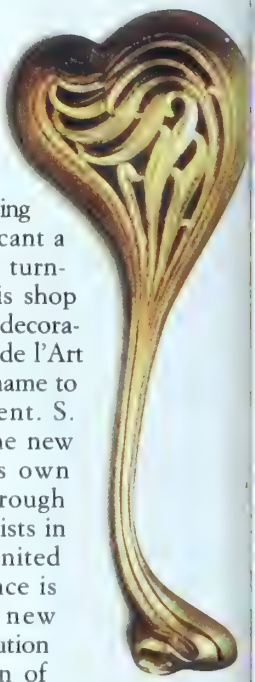
FIGURING IT OUT

Anniversaries inspire a web of complex feelings, and those observed by museums are no exception. Fifty years old in 1985, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art spent much of last year looking back to its birth in 1935, when under Dr. Grace Morley it ventured to become one of the first museums outside New York devoted to modern art. In a certain sense, SFMMA has not stopped celebrating. But with "Second Sight," the museum's fourth biennial exhibition, it's not modern art that's being feted but current attitudes toward the modern. From September 21 to November 16 nearly twenty American and European artists, still challenged by the formidable heirlooms of Abstract Expressionism, Minimalism, and process art, will present their case for returning to the distant past—or for treating modern art as a hip, historicizing vision. Unlike art that revives style in order to revere it, this late modern art, according to curator Graham Beal, is about "diffusing the meaning" of style once artists mince and blend it for their own idiosyncratic purposes. It is a provocative exhibition, for which Beal has done some original thinking: defining the current irreverence for style in his own way and avoiding the guidelines of our art magazines, instead gathering artists often seen in other, neatly polemical contexts. Siah Armajani, Roger Brown, Komar and Melamid, Giulio Paolini, Earl Staley, Pat Steir, and Mark Tansey offer an unusual and unusually accomplished constellation of talent. *Marjorie Welish*



Earl Staley's *Bellerophon IV* (1984)

NOUVEAU RICHES



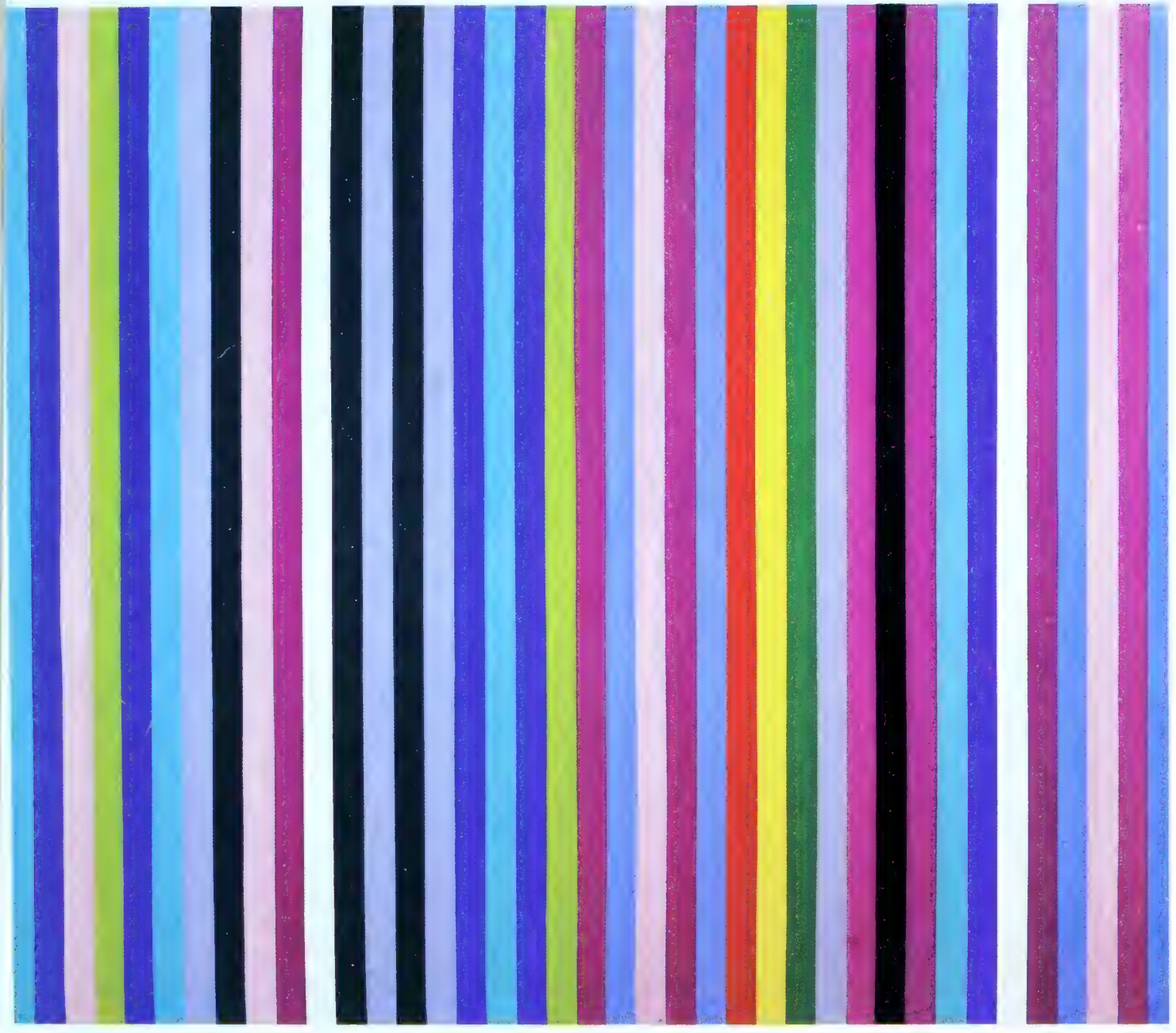
Vermeil sugar spoon, E. Colonna, 1900.

S (for Siegfried) Bing was so significant a tastemaker that his turn-of-the-century Paris shop dealing in fine and decorative arts, the Salon de l'Art Nouveau, gave its name to an entire movement. S. Bing supported the new style through his own workshops and through commissions to artists in Europe and the United States. His influence is the subject of a new Smithsonian Institution traveling exhibition of approximately two hundred Art Nouveau objects—prints, posters, furniture, ceramics, textiles, silver, jewelry—that the shop sold or made. On view first at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond September 16 through November 23, "The Paris Style 1900: Art Nouveau Bing" will travel to three other cities. Harry N. Abrams published the catalogue by the curator, Gabriel P. Weisberg. *Elaine Greene*



Hermann-Paul lithograph, 1895

GENE DAVIS



"Billy Budd," 1964. Acrylic on canvas 68½ x 76⅞ inches.

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TAKING THE VALE



Early 18th-century patka, Kashmir.

Since the sixteenth century, the nobility of fashion has heightened its grace with shawls from Kashmir. Examples of these textiles, accompanied by related ones from Europe, make up "The Scent of Flowers: Woolen Textiles from Kashmir" at the Textile Museum in Washington, D.C., through February 15, 1987.

Indeed, the scent of Kashmir's Himalayan lushness becomes almost palpable in the shawls. Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century designers developed a unique cone-shaped motif based on Persian-influenced Mughal floral designs. The vivid formal delicacy of these motifs is matched by the delicacy of the material. The finest shawls, woven from gossamer fibers obtained from Himalayan mountain goats, make the Western translation into cashmere seem quite coarse. *Klaus Kertess*

Satin and wool embroidery, Kashmir, c. 1830–50.



RITES OF SECESSION



Color lithograph postcard of a fashion design by Maria Likarz.

New York's Galerie St. Etienne is presenting the Viennese pioneers of twentieth-century Modernism through November 8. Featuring the Wiener Werkstätte and reflecting its members' desire for a fusion of all the arts, the exhibition (concurrent with MoMA's big Vienna show) includes furniture, textiles, graphics, and fashion as well as paintings by artists such as Klimt. Included are objects by Josef Hoffmann, who was instrumental in inventing new and pure forms for the machine age without sacrificing his (or Vienna's) native elegance. *K.K.*

Bertold Löffler's 1907 poster for the Cabaret Fledermaus.



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(Continued from page 224) have nineteenth-century architectural elements in it now.

GROPP: Part of our impulse to investigate period rooms has been triggered by our conversations with Robert Trent after we commissioned an article by him on Connecticut furniture. Bob, would you tell us what you think needs to be thought about in the creation and presentation of period rooms?

ROBERT F. TRENT, *Curator, The Connecticut Historical Society*
I've only been involved in the formulation of one suite of rooms in a period house. I form my opinion on the basis of working in what was a somewhat rundown series of period rooms at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, on studying the Garvan Collection, which is an extremely avant-garde installation of decorative-arts objects at Yale by Charles Montgomery, and on my present work at The Connecticut Historical Society, where I do a lot of restoration of small objects, a lot of worrying about surfaces. But these disparate experiences lead to the same questions about the philosophy toward a period room. Should the furniture look as if it is two hundred years old? Should you upholster a two-hundred-year-old frame to look brand-new? Does that do fundamental violence to the object? A lot of collectors would say right away, "This thing does not look properly old."
I basically feel that in major museum settings, the period rooms are an impediment, both to the integrity of the objects and to the simple science of getting a herd of people through the spaces. Clearly many museums now feel, certainly their administrators feel, that in order to get some of the dwindling government money to support the subsidized exhibitions, they have got to maintain a big gate. And having a big gate go through a museum like Winterthur is a disaster, with worries about traffic, security, wear.
If I were designing a new museum wing now, I would never put a period room into it. I wouldn't care how many people were lined up to destroy the original houses.

[illegible] that I would tend

PILGRIM: I would too.

GROPP: You would agree? That astonishes me. We want to discuss that in depth, but first I want to hear from Christina Nelson. What is happening to your period rooms in Saint Louis?

CHRISTINA H. NELSON, *Curator of Decorative Arts, The Saint Louis Art Museum*
A large renovation of our museum is taking place, and we are redoing the period rooms literally from the ground up. We have decided to reinstall four of the five American period rooms that we had before. Fortunately we have

There is a real identity crisis. Art museums are charged with preserving objects and also with the interpretation of those objects and the education of the public. In some ways these two charges are in conflict.
—CHRISTINA H. NELSON

fairly good documentation, and we know how to undo some of the indiscriminate changes in original woodwork that so many museums made in the 1920s and '30s, ours included. Fortunately our rooms had not been stripped, so we were able to do a complete paint analysis. We are staying away from late nineteenth century be-



The Shaker Room at The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

cause there are interesting house museums of this period within easy driving distance, but we have to go east to see eighteenth-century historical houses.

GROPP: Brock, where do you stand in the debate about period rooms? Your part of the country has more than its share of historic houses.

BROCK JOBE, *Chief Curator and Director of Museums, Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities*
I thank God I do not work in an art museum. I am very content to work in a society administering historical houses; there is a world of difference in the function of the period room within those two settings. At SPNEA we have dramatic variations in the way our houses are interpreted. At one end of the range is the 1940s kind of "let's create a nice, sympathetic setting: eighteenth-century antiques in an eighteenth-century house." You can still find that approach in several SPNEA houses as well as in historical societies throughout New England.
There was a dramatic shift at the Society in the late 1960s with the arrival of a gentleman named George Wren, who very strongly felt that it was a form of hypocrisy to try and phony up the eighteenth century. He felt, "Let's simply take a house as it is given to us, and let's show it as that last owner had it." And George went to great extremes. The most notable was the Codman House in Lincoln, Massachusetts, a house that dates, in its earliest form, from the 1740s.
That house came to the Society in 1968 from Dorothy Codman, the last of the Codmans who had owned the house. Upon seeing it, George was thrilled and made the decision then and there—and the Society went along for a number of years—to leave everything just as it was with the layers of generations showing forth: the possessions of the first owners, the second owners, the third owners, whatever. It was the "freeze philosophy," and it got to the point where even light bulbs were to be left, and if one burned out, it was to be saved and recorded as a light bulb of 1967 or 1968. Dorothy Codman was an invalid for the last two years of her life and had to have a bed on the first floor, and the question came up and was de-

bated fiercely about whether Dorothy's hospital bed should go.
So it became an almost silly discussion, but the philosophy is important. Now the Society has come back to a kind of compromise midway between the 1940s approach and the extreme of freezing it exactly as we find it. We recognize that any house can be used to interpret a particular period in its history. You need to do all kinds of research—technical, historical, curatorial, educational—to determine the best era for a particular house.

GROPP: Now that we have all had a chance to hear one another's voices, I am wondering if my colleagues at House & Garden want to interject any questions now.

MARTIN FILLER, *Editor, House & Garden*
I think we have reached a critical point in the discussion. Should period rooms exist in museums?

GROPP: There seems to be a general agreement on this side of the table that period rooms should go. That is what I thought I heard you say, David.

WARREN: I said I would not add a period room, but I would not subtract them. Maybe "not add" is even too strong. There would have to be some very compelling reason for me to add a period room in a museum gallery.

GROPP: Would you elaborate on that?

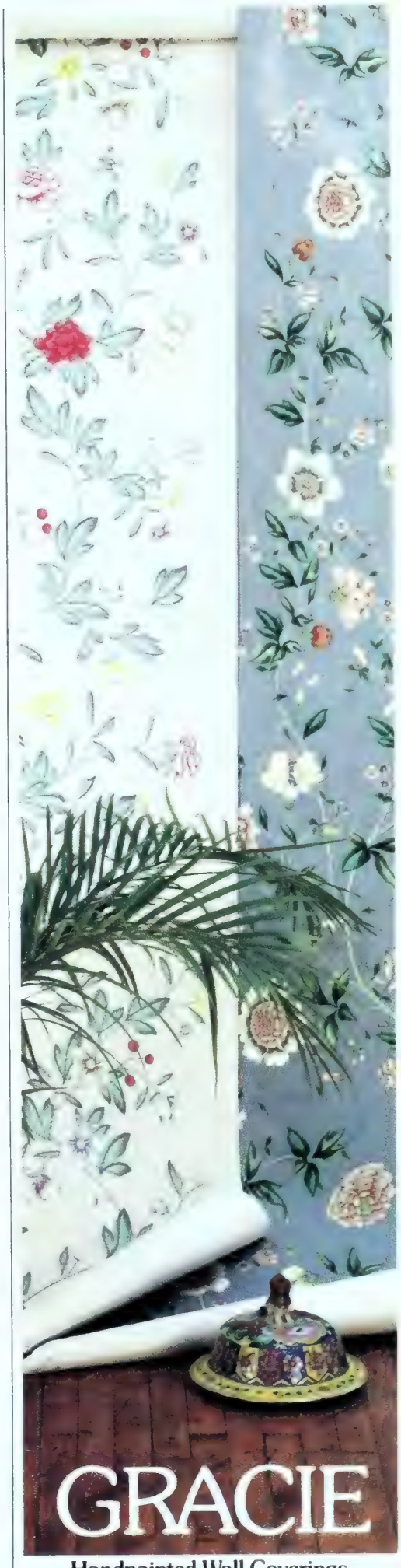
WARREN: Well, I like objects, and it is very hard to see objects in period rooms because period rooms are montages. To home in on an individual object is very difficult unless you suddenly have a spotlight on it. I think the period room for the normal visitor almost precludes really seeing things well.

GROPP: Diane, do you want to comment on this?

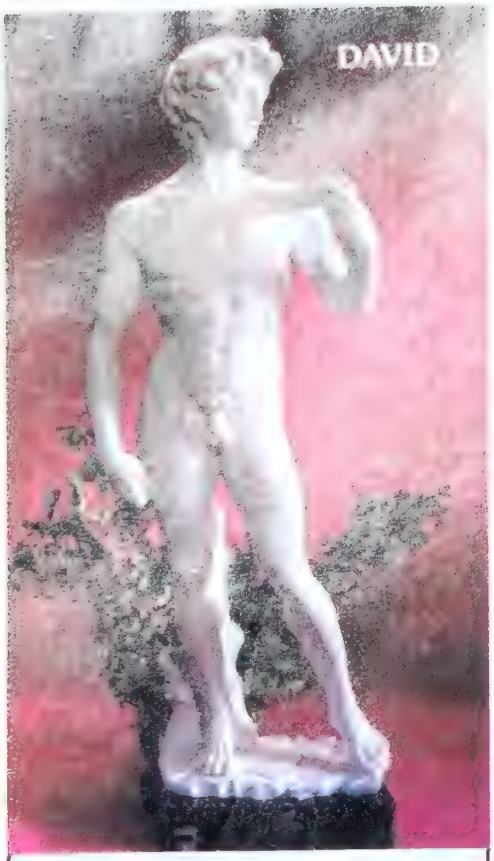
PILGRIM: In response to what Bob [Trent] was saying earlier, I feel that if a museum does not have period rooms, they should not go out and collect them, for all the reasons that have been mentioned. David is right: great objects get totally lost. When the rooms were first opened at Brooklyn, the public could walk through them. To-



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day's glass cages ruin the immediacy of the experience.

GROPP: How do you respond to the way, say, the High Museum handles its collection of decorative arts where you suddenly see a Belter sofa on a pedestal at eye level?

PILGRIM: You see it ideally. I hope we will one day have the money for period rooms that give you some sort of social and historical context with those objects, and then have an adjacent gallery where you have the best pieces. I consider decorative arts *art,* and they should be on a pedestal in the spotlight. I want people to really look at them and appreciate them and love them, and you can't do that in a period room.

NELSON: That is actually what we plan to do at Saint Louis: period rooms with adjacent gallery spaces. So it will, we hope, make sense to see the objects in some sort of context and then be able to walk into a gallery and see our greatest individual objects from the same period.

PILGRIM: It is still a problem in an art museum. I mean, what are we? We are not there to talk about history and sociology particularly. Most period rooms in art museums are about style.

JOHNSON: There are some tremendous problems in the installation of period rooms, and we have all faced them. Perhaps for that reason we would be loathe to collect more rooms, but that is not the same as an aesthetic reason. A period room gives us a unique way to perceive. A room in a film or in a photograph is totally different from the experience of being in a room.

WARREN: I said collect if there were compelling circumstances. The Met's new Frank Lloyd Wright Room with its original Frank Lloyd Wright furnishings displays a forceful unity. If there is such a unity available, OK, do it. But to get a room and then scratch around here and there to put it all together is something I would look at with a much more jaundiced eye.

JOHN RICHARDSON, *Consulting Editor, House & Garden*
And then to bring in a decorator like the Met has done in the Wrightsman rooms—you have a feeling in these rooms that rich New Yorkers are living here in the 1960s or '70s and that instead of opening the window on the Place des Vosges you are going to see Fifth Avenue. I think that this is unfortunate.

HUMMEL: But I think that we have to remember that by their very nature museums are artificial creations. A museum cannot and never will re-create life as it was or is. Obviously I have to be a defender of the period room—not because I work at Winterthur but because although I also enjoy objects, I enjoy period rooms. Winterthur would not be Winterthur without period rooms. We do not have some of the problems that a normal art museum does, because we limit attendance with our reservation system. People can walk through the rooms in about the same numbers that originally did.

We are there for the thing *rather than the sociological story that goes along with it. The sociology is not the job of an art museum.*

—DAVID B. WARREN

I think period rooms show relationships of objects in a way that galleries never do. You can go into a room filled with objects that were used in Rhode Island, say, even if they were not all used in Newport, and see design vocabularies, see approaches of craftsmen, see scale that matches. It is primarily artistic.
I never want to knock the reaction of a twentieth-century visitor. Even if the period setting has nothing to do with the eighteenth century, they are seeing something that is really beautiful and enjoyable. There is nothing wrong with having museum visitors obtain that feeling of enjoyment and appreciation in looking at objects in a context aside from strict historical accuracy.

NELSON: It does help people make connections with the objects. It was noticed in Saint Louis, before the decision was made to reinstall the period rooms, that the public responds to period rooms in a way that they do not respond to objects lined up in a row in the gallery center. They somehow feel more a part of the room.


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GROPP: Why is that true? This is a big country. Why shouldn't the West Coast have its restored Winterthur?

PILGRIM: I do think that there is a question of historic preservation and that we all agree we would like to see a house remain intact. If a situation arises, as it did in Meriden, Connecticut, where the house was going to be torn down, then I think the Met did rescue something very important.

[illegible] And I also think we should realize that there is virtually no place in this country where one could see a room comparable to the Meriden room both that degree of sophistication and with its original contents, in either a museum or a historic house.

A period room gives us a unique way to perceive. A room in a film or a photograph is totally different. —MARILYNN JOHNSON

JELLEY GROPP: Also in defense of period rooms, Charles's point about the interrelationship of different kinds of objects in one setting is crucial. Nowhere in a museum gallery setting, or very rarely, do you get furniture sitting on carpets with silver and lighting fixtures and ornaments—all of a single distilled style. Another point is that if we consider furniture as art, certainly interior architecture is art as well. And if we don't install period rooms, where would one install period architecture in a museum?

PILGRIM: One reason the period room is popular is that it doesn't have the intellectual baggage a painting or a sculpture does. Everybody has a chair and a table and a rug. Visitors feel relaxed.

NELSON: We also find that period rooms bring people into the decorative arts areas of museums, and we hope when they are made that they will be curious about other aspects of the things they see and that their vision will be expanded in some way. For example, I have had a dozen people in this field tell me that a trip to Colonial Williamsburg at the age of twelve decided their careers.

JOBE: We have to keep in mind that many of the house museums are very hard to get to. SPNEA's Hamilton House is not in the middle of a city. You drive to South Berwick, Maine, and then down a dirt road for about a mile. I wish we could better publicize and promote historic houses. A historic house offers a better sense of how life was lived in its period than any period room in a museum. For all the inaccuracies that SPNEA's Sayward House in York, Maine, has, I think it conveys the feel of the eighteenth century more accurately than any eighteenth century room that has been re-created.

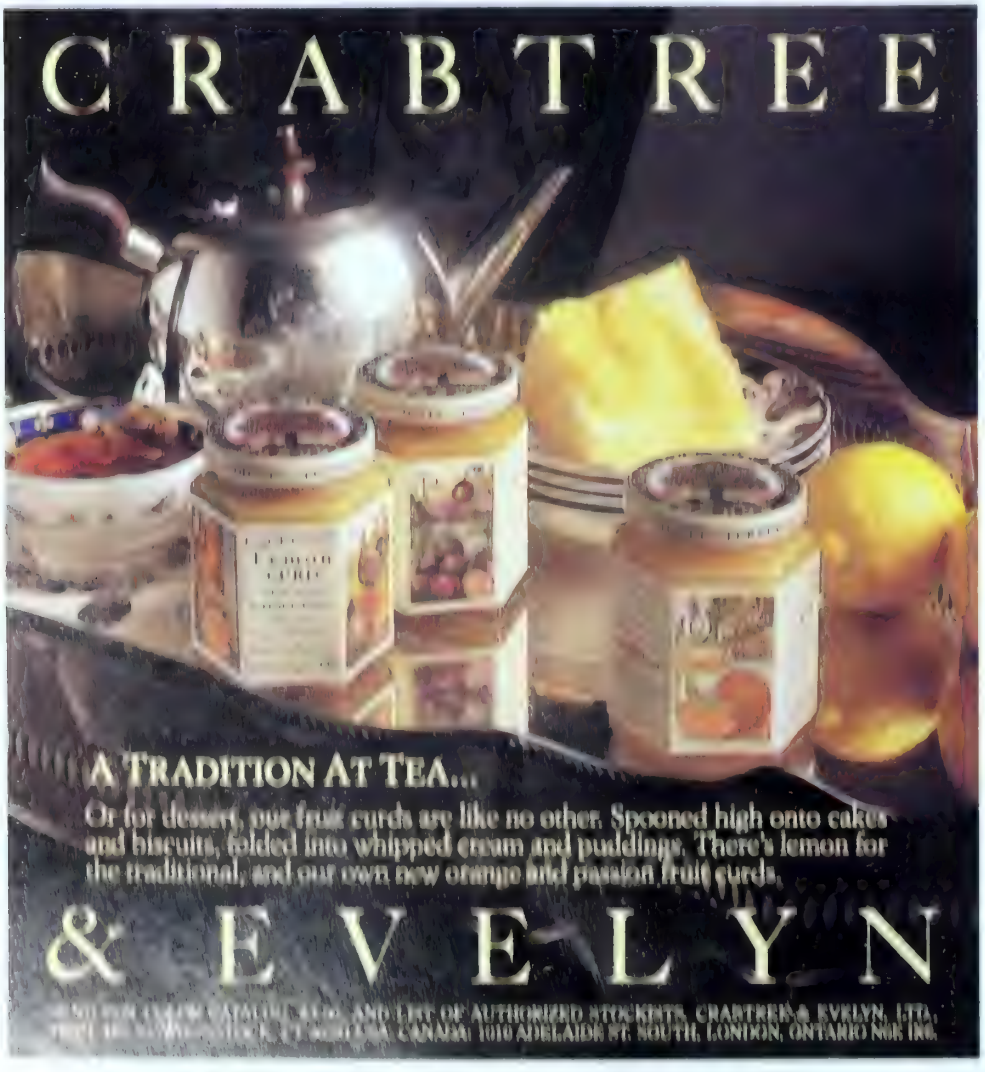
GROPP: If you had your druthers, would you take a room out of that house and move it to the Met?

JOBE: No, I would not.

GROPP: Why wouldn't you?

JOBE: Well, first of all, I would be most concerned about the integrity of the total house. And then at the Met you wouldn't see it installed in context with the hallway or the rooms above or the environment. You'd have a very different feel. These houses, as well as the people who lived in them, are rooted to that area.

IRENE: There is a preservation problem and a representation problem. What is the sense of putting a period room in a museum if it doesn't meet period standards of space, light, texture, surface? And then because you are conserving textiles no one can see the stuff because it is too dark in there. I



would like to see a major art museum spend the money to make as dead accurate reproductions as possible so that the great masses could in fact go in and sit and handle and use these things with the idea that there is going to be pilferage and damage built into an operating budget.

GROPP: How do the other curators here feel about having reproductions in your museums?

HUMMEL: We started a conscious program in the late 1960s at Winterthur to retire all of our antique textiles and replace them with accurate reproductions for conservation purposes. The attrition rate from the time some of the first rooms were installed was absolutely incredible for fabrics, even with environmental and light controls. At some point in the future all of the textiles at Winterthur will be reproductions. Now that's a compromise, of course, and it is done primarily to have something of the original remaining for scholars, students, the general public, and anyone who is interested to study the original document. But the reproduction is not the same as the original.

WARREN: I'm not very fond of reproductions as a general rule, but I think what we all have to face with textiles, which are so fugitive, is that it is irresponsible not to use reproductions.

PILGRIM: That was a policy decision that we made, to use textile reproductions.

FRELINGHUYSEN: The Met has also made pretty much the same decision.

NELSON: We've made the decision to use only reproduction textiles, too.

HUMMEL: What do you do with a period room installation at a museum or a historic house, Brock, when your research and documentation prove that someone had a set of a dozen chairs and you have one of them? You know you could perhaps find eight or nine similar, maybe close but no cigar in terms of matching. Is it better to have a set of reproduction chairs made up to give the ambience, feeling, scale, and appearance of that room originally?

JOBE: I think that it is.

HUMMEL: But I know that there are many people who feel there is absolutely no place for reproduction furniture in a period room setting.

FRELINGHUYSEN: I am certain we would never insert reproduction furniture. But there are compromises. The Shaker retiring room is another room I have been actively involved in and that originally had at least four beds in it. We have just one Shaker bed in ours. You just have to explain it on the labels.

SIMPSON: I'd like to see the four beds in it. I would like to see the squalor that they lived in, how congested it was, how they really did live in those tiny houses.

PILGRIM: That is not the job of an art museum, to teach social history.

SIMPSON: So in other words, one example of each thing.

WARREN: Well, we are there for the *thing* rather than the sociological story that goes along with it. The sociology is not the job of an art museum.

JOBE: I would like to touch on our obligation to make visitors aware of how a setting was created and what it displays. This was always a problem at Colonial Williamsburg: many people went through the houses as they had been redone by John Graham in the 1960s thinking this was the way individuals *lived* in the eighteenth century even though many professionals knew that the houses were a far cry from what life was really like. How you furnish and interpret a building for the public is very important.

FILLER: If I may introduce another subject, I would be curious to know what some of you consider the most successful museum period rooms you have seen.

TRENT: I think that the present Governor's Palace at Colonial Williamsburg is good, and Benno Forman's rooms at Pennsbury Manor are good. I hesitate to propose my own work at Saugus, but it is the only high-style seventeenth-century American period room in either a historic house or a museum.

FRELINGHUYSEN: I think that some of the best are the Rockefeller rooms at the Museum of the City of New York and the Brooklyn where literally every



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thing i[illegible] the antimacassars on the furniture.

PILGRIM: I will say something that people may object to. I think that art museum curators, as long as they do not destroy the original art work or the architecture, can do whatever they want, provided they tell the public what they are doing and why they are doing it. What any of us does winds up being very subjective. One of the hardest choices I had to make was in our Cupola House, which was from Edenton, North Carolina. We knew that the pigment of both the large room and the parlor were Prussian blue. Prussian blue is a pigment that's very unstable. It yellows, it becomes turquoise. What shade of blue? I had all the historical information I was going to get, and yet it still left me in a quandary as to what that color blue looked like in the eighteenth century. I finally came to the realization that it was just my choice. I had to pick a blue.

There are choices you make throughout every period room, so it is very subjective even though you are trying your hardest to be as accurate as possible. I think one of the most useful aspects of the book we came out with in 1980 when some of our rooms reopened is that we show you how the rooms looked in 1929 when they first opened, how they looked in the 1940s when John Graham worked on them, and how they look today.

NELSON: To expand a bit on the subject of color: people in our time, a time of pastels and muted colors, like to think that people in the eighteenth century and early nineteenth century also liked muted colors. But they did not. Whenever we find a bit of original color on furniture or walls or textiles where it has been protected from the light, we see that the colors were really quite vivid.

WARREN: And wasn't it really something when the SPNEA's Harrison Gray Otis House was redone about fifteen years ago? It was all so tasteful and Wedgwoody before, then wow, bing, bang, all those colors. And it works.

GROPP: I wonder if we could go back to the question of who museums are for. Earlier I heard some ambivalence about the hordes walking through. Are museums only respositories for academics? How do you feel as curators?

NELSON: Well, there is a real identity crisis. Art museums are charged with preserving objects and also with the interpretation of those objects and the education of the public. In some ways these two charges are in conflict, as, for example, in exhibiting period textiles.

WARREN: I think you have to work as hard as possible, within curatorial standards, to present your collections to as many people as possible without jeopardizing the safety and preservation for future generations.

JOBE: I agree that it is difficult to accommodate large groups of people in a historic house interior—you can take only so many people through. The decorative-arts gallery offers the opportunity to handle many more people. But you lose something in the process. The texture and intimacy of a furnished interior are replaced by the openness of a gallery.

GROPP: What periods are of particular interest right now?



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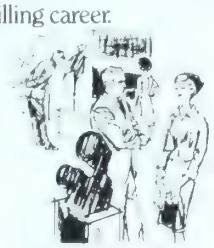
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FRELINGHUYSEN: There is certainly a growing interest in the whole nineteenth century, particularly the later years.

GROPP: What do you think is behind that? This interest has been obvious to us for some time, too.

DENISE OTIS, *Editor, House & Garden* I think it's distance—when you get far enough away, interest rises.

PILGRIM: You always need distance. When I started collecting twenties and thirties things almost fifteen or eighteen years ago, my mother said, "How can you be interested in that awful stuff? That is what I grew up with." And that is what I feel about the fifties.

SIMPSON: I don't think everybody hates what they grew up with, I really don't.

FRELINGHUYSEN: It's also as a reaction to the spare modern taste that we're getting back to the textures, colors, and patterns that are part of later nineteenth-century decoration.

HUMMEL: Late-nineteenth-century materials are available, and eighteenth-century materials are not—at least not in the quantities found in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

WARREN: As far as the nineteenth century is concerned, don't you think that museums have played a large role in reawakening respectability and taste? Think of Berry Tracy's "Classical America" exhibition in the early 1960s and similarly the exhibition for the Met's 100th anniversary. People had not seen such stuff in museums. When you have museums giving people a chance to see design and you have organizations like the Victorian Society with its publications, knowledge develops and the rest comes along. But it also has to be a matter of the zeitgeist: look at what is happening in architecture today.

GROPP: Also there is a certain integrity in the thing itself. Sometimes you see an object you know nothing about, but it is so wonderful you immediately love it. So I would hope museums are always repositories of excellence.

WARREN: Which is why you can't show reproductions because that is a step away, missing that whatever-it-is originals possess.

GROPP: Here we all are and I just want

quo. Now all that was to come to an end at last, at once, in all the arts.

No sooner had Marinetti's call to arms appeared in *Le Figaro* (with offprints thoughtfully mailed to hundreds of influential Italians) than he was out seeking recruits to the cause. As has often been said, Futurism was not a style but a movement, and that is borne out in the diverse and personal ways in which the artists who gathered around Marinetti applied his principles to their own work. Unlike the Analytic Cubist canvases of Picasso and Braque, which are sometimes difficult to distinguish between, the works of each Futurist showed a very different approach in illustrating the promise he signed his name to: "We shall henceforward put the spectator in the center of the picture."

The oldest of the Futurists, the 38-year-old Giacomo Balla, concentrated on the effects of light, which had been his primary interest all along; but now he explored them in movement rather than in the static compositions of his earlier work. Like the other Futurists, he was familiar with recent experiments in time-lapse photography; though painters of the mid nineteenth century had sought to stake out new territories for their art in reaction to the threat photography posed to their monopoly on representation, the Futurists gladly embraced what photography had taught them.

Balla took the freeze-frame, multiple-exposures of the chronophotograph (most memorably employed in the locomotion experiments of Eadweard Muybridge) and translated them into such canvases as *Girl Running on a Balcony, Rhythm of the Violinist,* and the irresistibly droll *Dynamism of a Dog on a Leash,* all painted in 1912. His considerably more abstract and powerful 1913 studies of a speeding automobile (to which an entire gallery is devoted at the Palazzo Grassi) show how paint can create visual sensations we now generally associate with motion pictures.

Carlo Carrà (like the other Futurist painters a decade younger than Balla) was out to capture motion, too, but his aims had more of a propagandist edge. His tumultuous evocation of *The Funeral of the Anarchist Galli* (1910–11) comes much closer than Balla to putting the spectator in the center; it is also



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one of the ... protest pictures of all ... his searing memory ... riot at the burial of an out... anarchist, the flailing truncheons and the panic they caused are virtually palpable; the precariously tilted, flag-draped coffin at the center echoes the color of a blood red sun. Instead of the "divisionist" technique of Balla (comparable to the Pointillist method of the Neo-Impressionists), Carrà's fragmented, radial format provided a depth of visual involvement that intensifies his emotional subject matter.

Not all Futurists applied themselves to topics of political and social urgency, and some took refuge in themes as superficial as those of the art-for-art's-sake painters of Art Nouveau. Although Gino Severini was a signer of the original Futurist Manifesto and his works were included in the group's controversial shows, the perspective of 75 years now makes him seem lightweight compared with his confederates. Based in Paris from 1906 onward, Severini had one eye trained on the epochal advances of the Cubists, and because of his geographical remove from the center of Futurist activity in Milan he was the movement's odd man out. His lively, if hardly profound, studies of cabaret dancers (occasionally with sequins glued onto the canvas for greater verisimilitude) are much more Parisian than Italian in tone, and it is not surprising that he drifted away from Futurism after World War I.

The movement's real man of parts was Umberto Boccioni, who pushed himself further than any of his contemporaries in service of the Futurist ideal. His first tries were interesting but rather conventional. Best known is *The City Rises* of 1910–11. (All the preliminary sketches as well as the monumental final version, now in New York's Museum of Modern Art, are in the Venice exhibition.) In that whirlwind composition, Boccioni used a team of straining horses, age-old symbol of labor, to suggest the dynamic effort expended in building the metropolis behind. In essence, though, this baroque imbroglio was no more innovative than one of Rubens's equine tours de force of three hundred years earlier.

Boccioni really came into his own later in 1911 with his intriguing *States of Mind,* a sequence of three paintings subtitled *The Farewells, Those Who Stay,* and *Those Who Go,* each capturing with brilliant specificity a feeling any traveler will recognize. The artist raced on from there, but his furiously fractured interpretations of men and animals in motion were lost on a public totally unprepared for such radical departures from what art was generally understood to be.

Though the Futurists deeply admired the remarkably subtle wax sculptures of their older contemporary Medardo Rosso (included in the "Towards Futurism: 1880–1909" prelude at the Palazzo Grassi), only a few of them turned their hand to sculpture, and none more memorably than Boccioni. Like his fellow Futurists, he believed that an object must not be a discrete thing unto itself but should express its impact on its surroundings. As the *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Painting* put it, "Our bodies penetrate the sofas upon which we sit, and the sofas penetrate our bodies." Boccioni tried to convey the phenomena of simultaneity and reciprocity (absorbed from physics via the latest theories of Einstein and his colleagues). His *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space* of 1913 is a propulsive male figure striding forth with all the confidence the Futurists wished for the modern man of action. At the Palazzo Grassi, it is raised on an eye-level pedestal and set against a dramatic black wood backdrop endowing it with an even more imposing presence. It could hold its own among the best works Italy has ever produced, which can be said of very few other Futurist artifacts.

In another sense as well, Boccioni was the archetypal Futurist. Like his confreres, he believed in war as a purgative for society's ills, and along with the other Futurists he campaigned vigorously on behalf of Italy's entry into World War I on the side of the Allies. The Futurists indulged their bloodlust to an extent that now seems psychopathic, especially considering the toll it soon took on the future of the movement itself. Upon Italy's declaration of war against Austria-Hungary and Germany in 1915, the Futurists enlisted almost to a man. By the war's end, according to Marinetti's reckoning, thirteen Futurists (including Boccioni) had been killed and another 41 injured.

Among the dead was the 28-year-old architect Antonio Sant'Elia, a latecomer to the movement but one of its most influential participants. In 1912 he organized a band of like-minded architects into a group called *Nuove Tendenze* ("New Tendencies"), whose technocentric agenda sounded much like the manifestos of the Futurists. Two years later he formally united with the Futurists, who for some time had wanted an architect to complete their comprehensive assault on the arts. Since the Futurists reveled in the metaphors of factories and machinery, it is no wonder that Sant'Elia's immense visionary power stations, dams, and towers looming over vast roads and landing strips became their urban ideal.

Sant'Elia's wizardry as a draftsman, however, was just about all that lay behind those glimmering mirages. A notably poor student, he could hardly have brought those staggering megastructures to reality, even under the most generous patronage. With no ground plans for those complex pileups of skyscrapers, bridges, and highways, his stunning renderings were merely picturesque, like the scenographic Gothick traceries of the early Romantics. Still, they have exerted tremendous power on the modern imagination: the designs of a number of present-day architects, from the hotel fantasy glitz of John Portman in this country to the high-tech pipe dreams of Richard Rogers and Norman Foster in England, find their spiritual origins in the strange new world so unforgettably limned by Sant'Elia.

Although major Futurist retrospectives have been seen in the United States at The Museum of Modern Art in New York (1961) and the Philadelphia Museum of Art (1980–81), the Palazzo Grassi show will take its place beside them in positioning the Futurists at the center of modern art and architectural history. The 250 paintings and sculptures (as well as over 500 books, periodicals, manifestos, catalogues, and letters) brought together in Venice definitively answer the question posed by the critic Giovanni Papini in his 1913 article "The Significance of Futurism." "Futurism has made people laugh, shout, and spit," he wrote. "Let's see if it can make them think." □ *Editor: Marie-Paule Pellé*

(Continued from page 205) Stockholm, another city of canals. "So we had a big discussion about the green of the carpets. I talked about *vert Nil,* and some time later Gae phoned and said that they had searched and researched and there was no such color." Call it *vert Nil, eau de Nil,* or, like a few less-impressed critics, *eau de clinique,* it has transformed a dowdy old palace into a bright new house for art, and if for some the building now has the air of an aging beauty wearing a touch too much makeup, sunlight and time will soften the hard edges.

In any case, colors change and can be changed easily. The prime consideration for Aulenti and her colleague Foscari was the organization of the space. In the beginning, to see exactly what they had, they completely cleared the building, an operation that filled fifty rubbish barges and revealed a structure in reasonably good order. Where repairs to the external walls were needed, bricks from an eighteenth-century building under demolition were used. Then solutions to the special problems of Venice were found, such as an ingenious method of protection from the *aque alte,* or high waters, which periodically swamp the city.

Once they had solved the conservation problems, pointing the way, says Foscari, to "hope for the future of all of Venice," their goal was to provide an exhibition space with all the services and equipment that curators and collectors now require before they will lend works: air conditioning against summer heat and winter humidity, a multilayered system of window blinds to screen damaging ultraviolet rays, sophisticated security installations.

"But," explains Foscari, "we did not want a conflict between the innovations and the parts of the building that had been conserved: the decorated ceilings, the frescoes, the marble and Venetian terrazzo floors, all the original walls." The solution was an arrangement of inner walls that stop short of the ceilings and are in places articulated into flaring "columns." Aulenti expresses the inevitability of this "skin" of inner walls, as it came to be called early in the project, in terms of its function vis-à-vis the building as well as the art for which it will be the background.

"We had to hide everything," she says, "because we didn't want the equipment to intrude on the existing building or to affect the works of art." From her commissions in Paris to reorganize the exhibition spaces in the Centre Pompidou and to renovate the Gare d'Orsay for use as a museum, Aulenti has learned what she calls a "rapport" with works of art.

"It is very important," she maintains, "that the works of art determine the space and its use and the way of visiting it. It must be a little like a voyage in search of treasures. Works of art are a marvel, a fantastic heritage, so they must have spaces that are very harmonious for the viewer's confrontation with them."

The lessons of the Palazzo Grassi project extend beyond technical innovations and theories of design. "Our clarity of conception," claims Foscari, "permitted us to develop our work in a very reduced time so there were not heavy interest payments on money being spent. It would have cost thirty percent more for a normal restoration. We didn't have to cut corners but we also never deviated from our plan. We followed both the work program and budget exactly."

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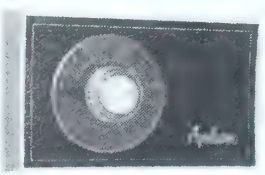
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enti, "and of [illegible] particular crafts such as [illegible] stonework and st[illegible] wo[illegible] However," she adds, "I don't know how much longer it will last."

Not everyone in Venice agrees that the transformation is a complete success. Conservation conservatives in the city maintain that even the "skin" is intrusive and that Venetian buildings should be preserved exactly as they were built. But there are precedents in the city for successful adaptations of older structures, from Renaissance installations in Gothic spaces to Carlo Scarpa's brilliant uses of ancient churches and palaces for Venice's biennial international contemporary art show. "After all," points out Foscari, who with his family lives a thoroughly modern life in one of Palladio's best-known villas, "there has never been a first time for a city that is twelve centuries old."

The Italian Futurist artists whose work was chosen to inaugurate the new space would have had a good laugh about it all. For poet Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, the movement's motor force, and disciples Balla, Boccioni, Carrà, Russolo, and Severini, museums were cemeteries, to be visited, like one's ancestors, once a year. The city of Venice itself occupied a special place in their hearts. Shortly after the first publication in 1909 of his Futurist Manifesto, Marinetti expressed the collective Futurist attitude when he referred to the city reverently known by Italians as La Serenissima as *una cloaca massima,* or supreme sewer. The greening of the Palazzo Grassi certainly has disturbed La Serenissima's composure. But it could well turn out to be an important step in assuring new life and vitality to a city that, though far from being a sewer, is in grave danger of succumbing to age and nature. □

Editor: Marie-Paule Pellé

GENTLE FOLK AT WORK

(Continued from page 189) The house is situated on the sloping side of a hollow, with its own barns and sheds all strung along the old road, which is now the driveway. Across the road that runs in front of the house is a forest, and to the rear there is a view across an open meadow and pond to a rolling hillside with apple trees at its crest, an exquisite landscape in miniature. What a superb spot, we thought, for making a garden. But first there were the house and its problems to contend with.

When we began to restore the house eight years ago, we were pleased to find that much good work had already been done by the former owners. In fact they had saved the house from falling down altogether in the 1940s when they began the hard task of pulling everything back together. A succession of owners and tenants had had little interest in making repairs and no respect at all for the house's venerable beauty. One story recounted to us by a 93-year-old descendant of the original owners was particularly chilling. Born a Hollister, she had grown up in the house and remembered the doors to the original corner cupboard being chopped into pieces and thrown into the fire one winter. She was surprised to see that in the downstairs bedroom we had restored the summer beam, which she said her mother had hated and gone at with an ax. She also mentioned, rather disdainfully I thought, that her father would never have allowed all these trees to grow up in his time. I was reminded of Alexis de Tocqueville, the nineteenth-century traveler to America who complained that there were so few trees in Connecticut. How sad the landscape would have looked to my eyes.

With this kind of vandalism by the owners plus the natural wear and tear of many years it is no wonder there had been so much to do forty years ago to get the house into livable condition. On the first floor some damaged floorboards had been replaced with boards from the attic, and a wall of handsome period paneling had been installed in the downstairs bedroom. In the keeping room old pine boards had replaced the original ones over the fireplace, where a large hole had been cut in the nineteenth century for the pipe of a Franklin stove—a common fate of early fireplaces since the Franklin stove was so much more efficient than a fireplace with a large chimney.

More remodeling after the 1940s restoration left much to be desired, and there remained parts of the house still in very bad condition. There were structural problems, too. Once at a neighborhood cocktail party someone told us that our house was known locally as the "thermal sieve." I remember laughing, but there was nothing funny about the fact that we had no insulation. We had to rebuild whole walls and ceilings, and the wing from 1820 had to be almost completely gutted in order to make the walls proof against the cold.

Our biggest project was to tear down and rebuild almost the whole north end of the house. We had the rotten sill replaced and the wall rebuilt in the correct eighteenth-century manner, with wide oak boards, rosehead nails, and thin quarter-sawn clapboards milled in an old Vermont sawmill. The modern double kitchen windows were replaced with twelve-over-eight pane sash that matches the originals. My cabinetmaker used old boards and eighteenth-century bull's-eye glass to make us a new door, which completed the new façade. Inside we rescued the original parlor from its twentieth-century conversion into a country kitchen. Some moldings had to be restored, and the linoleum floor was replaced with old random-width boards. The kitchen was moved to the adjacent pantry and the parlor became our dining room.

From the first Ron and I agreed that we didn't want the house to look as if it had been decorated professionally. We would let the antiques and art decorate the house and leave the original architectural details to make their own decorative statement. Modern comforts there would be, but nothing would be allowed to disturb the warm, gentle patinas of the eighteenth century. Old fabrics would be used where possible and otherwise good reprints. We found that our choice of paint colors had to be arrived at carefully, too. If we chose a new color for walls or woodwork, we always had to add a little

brown or black to tone it down. Otherwise the furniture and old folk art looked dirty and dingy by contrast. Nothing could be too spanking clean. In fact I have come to the conclusion that with an early house it is wise to make the dirt work for you. If you fight it and insist upon cleaning up all the stains and smoothing out all the irregularities, the result will be sterile and lacking in character. After all, to the collector of fine antiques the polite word for dirt is patina, and without it any antique might as well be just another reproduction. I think the same is true of old houses; spruce them up too much and you lose the feeling of age, the most precious thing about them.

In the keeping room we chose warm reds for the upholstery, which would glow against the tawny pine walls. The reds are close, but each fabric is a slightly different color since we rarely like anything to match perfectly. The rusty reds of the slipware are all slightly different, too. Slipware was used for baking in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century America, and so it seems at home in the keeping room with its cavernous beehive oven in the back of the eight-foot fireplace. In the winter there are Kazak rugs in various shades of red, blue, and brown to give the room a cozier feeling than the bare floors of summer. The fireplace mantel is a replacement of the period from a neighboring town, which I was lucky enough to come across at an antiques show. We find ourselves changing the art on the walls of the keeping room several times a year since this is the room in which we spend the most time, and the variety is welcome. In the dining room Ron painted the old floorboards in black-and-white checkers, which was a treatment popular in eighteenth-century New England, although the one original example I have seen has smaller squares. We were tempted to paint the woodwork but couldn't bring ourselves to cover up the mellow pine. Yellow walls and a gray dado seemed a fitting counterpoint to the rigid geometry of the checkers.

Like the house, the garden was a complicated project. If we had settled for the usual New England garden of uneven contours with a few flowering trees and azaleas dotted about here and there, all would have been smooth

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sailing [illegible] glan[illegible] under the [illegible] and Vita Sackville-West. Nothing would do for us but a formal country garden with walls and paths and separate spaces. The problem was that our land was all sloping, with no flat areas at all, which made it necessary to have extensive terracing. We began by extending an existing fieldstone retaining wall along the length of the rear of the house so that the house would seem to rest on a broad stepped base. On top of this we planted a long perennial border with a path down the center. Getting a stonemason was not easy. We found that workmen would drive great distances to look at the job and spend hours chatting with us over coffee, but when it came to doing the actual work they never seemed to have the time. Finally we found a willing crew from the next town to complete the wall. Encouraged by this moderate success, we became more ambitious and embarked on the construction of an L-shaped brick wall 106 feet long and 8 feet high. One leg of the wall is freestanding and pierced by two doors, and the other leg is a retaining wall that separates a small garden above from a large garden below designed around a formal reflecting pool. Fortunately for us our neighbor, who was involved at that time in house construction, offered to contract the building of the wall and engineer its technical design. He gave the wall an enormous footing and a concrete core with steel tie-rods so it could withstand the dangerous frost heaving of our subzero winters. Before it was faced with brick the wall looked bleak and oppressive, and I fear some of our neighbors thought we had gone off the deep end. Someone's comment that the wall resembled the basement of a new supermarket was not all that far from the truth. But by the time the handmade bricks were laid in an irregular pattern over the cement the effect was such that an old man delivering paving stones asked if it was the foundation of an old barn. Some of the nicest compliments are those that are unintended.



Beautiful blend of colors and forms

The year after the wall and pond were completed we laid the stone paths ourselves, and soon the new garden was ready to be planted. Although the plan is formal, we wanted the planting to be loose and natural, like an exuberant jungle just barely held within civilized bounds. We have experimented with many plants to get the effects we want; some things we grow are rare and exotic and others are very ordinary. A plant's pedigree doesn't matter to me so long as it is beautiful and works in my planting schemes. It is the placement of flowers in the garden and their combination with other flowers that bring out their full beauty and create the magic that for me is the whole point of having a garden. Color, of course, is enormously important in the making of a garden, and we have strong feelings on the subject. We never place magenta next to golden yellow and we like to combine close colors for subtle contrast. Like many gardeners, we are fond of true blue, which we find will combine with almost anything. Gray or variegated foliage is useful for toning down bright colors and carrying the garden when the flowers have finished blooming. The small garden above the wall we call the Gray Garden because it is furnished with gray-leaved plants and predominantly white flowers, with a few pinks and blues thrown in for emphasis.

Our favorite time in the garden is in the evening when the light is gentle and the air is cool. The white flowers jump and the hot colors soften. The garden's faults are less visible and its good points are even lovelier. It becomes the enchanted place that we imagined when we first envisioned making it. □

Editor: Kaaren Parker Gray

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(Continued from page 168) at Marrakesh. A sign of the times: Impressionists are conspicuous by their absence.

As serious collectors of twentieth-century art, Saint Laurent and Bergé could hardly have made a more spectacular debut. Not content with acquiring Brancusi's monumental wooden sculpture *Portrait of Madame L. R.*—hieratic and totemic as the giant Senufo bird that guards the treasures of the salon—they snapped up a masterly Mondrian (soon to be followed by a second one) and, no less rare, a memorable "metaphysical" Chirico (1914) of a leaning obelisk confronting a disquietingly large egg. These are works without which no major retrospective would be complete.

In the ten years or so since acquiring these cornerstones, the two partners have continued to build up the collection, tirelessly pursuing masterpieces on both sides of the Atlantic. And their success in the dwindling, mine-trapped field of today's art market is a tribute to Saint Laurent's artistry and Bergé's enterprise. Despite his reputation as the most consistently elegant designer of our time, Saint Laurent evidently distrusts too much elegance in works of art and unequivocally prefers the deep to the shallow end of the Modern movement.

Besides Mondrian, Saint Laurent has a passion for Cubism at its most uncompromising; witness the marvelous Picasso (1914–15) of musical instruments piled on a gueridon, or the Juan Gris *Guitar* (1913), or the magnificent group of mostly early paintings by Fernand Léger. Far from making what decorators term a statement, the Légers positively yell, particularly the large *Nature morte au profil* (1928), which dates from the time when Léger, failing to find patrons for the murals he longed to execute, came up with a series of heroic paintings devised, as he said, to "*casser le mur*" (destroy the wall). Other landmarks include the only Edvard Munch painting, *Seascape with a Figure,* to have found its way to France; one of the finest (and largest) Cézanne watercolors of the Mont-Sainte-Victoire; a wonderfully taut and tough flowerpiece by Matisse; and an exceptionally large painting by Paul Klee. And as we go to press, yet another metaphysical Chirico is being added to the collection—the famous one that



Chirico's [illegible], Breton, pic[illegible] out fo[illegible]urent's illustrious pa[illegible]

[illegible]or have Saint Laurent and Bergé neglected earlier periods of art, particularly in the field of sculpture. Across the handsome expanse of a parrot-patterned carpet by Ernest Boiceau, classical marbles, African figures, and Renaissance and Mannerist bronzes confront each other on seemingly equal terms; just as a magnificent collection of mounted cameos and intaglios of all periods from antiquity to this century finds common ground with rock crystal obelisks that once belonged to Misia Sert and a collection of Art Deco bottles by Maurice Marinot. The same confrontations exist in the field of painting. The twentieth-century masterpieces described above—the Légers especially—seem to dominate the room, but look harder and you will see how successfully the earlier paintings hold their own: among them Gainsborough's portrait of the charismatic castrato Farinelli, who gained virtual control of Spain by singing the country's deranged king to sleep every night year after year; Goya's no less memorable portrait (1791) of the ten-year-old Luis María de Cistué with his dog, formerly in the Rockefeller collection, and finer, to my mind, than the Metropolitan Museum's hackneyed boy in red; Ingres's oval portrait of the Comtesse de La Rue (one of three works by the artist in this collection); Géricault's double portrait of Alfred de Dreux and Horace Vernet's daughter as children; and five gigantic pastels by Sir Edward Burne-Jones, *The River of Life,* commissioned by William Morris for the windows of a church in Liverpool. If these outrageously disparate works form an ensemble, it is because Saint Laurent has the authority of a Karajan when it comes to striking a balance between Africa's drumbeats and Léger's brass, between Farinelli's trills and Ingres's violin, not to mention the guitar that Juan Gris borrowed from Picasso.

Such an eclectic assemblage works all the better for being displayed against the simple thirtyish décor that came with this handsome apartment—décor that was probably (proof, alas, is lacking) contrived by Jean-Michel Frank for Saint Laurent's formidable predecessor Madame Cuttoli. Widow of a rich and powerful senator and mistress of the distinguished scientist Dr. Henri Laugier, Marie Cuttoli was for many years the friend, patron, confidante, and occasionally *bête noire* of Picasso. She it was who helped set up the Musée Picasso at Antibes and in the thirties persuaded the artist to do major designs—notably the vast pastel *Femme aux pigeons* (1935)—for tapestries and thus help revive the fading fortunes of Aubusson. By dint of persistent bullying and wheedling, Madame Cuttoli managed to extract a number of major works out of Picasso, works that were shown to spectacular effect against these plain oak walls. Saint Laurent has wisely made no changes whatsoever to Marie Cuttoli's sparse settings. The grand salon, however, is infinitely more beguiling under the present dispensation than it was in the days of my youth, when visits to the Picasso collection involved kowtowing to a lot of mangy old lions of the Radical party.

The basic décor of the dining room has likewise been left much as it was, but Saint Laurent's inspired eclecticism—a sumptuous Gobelins tapestry, marble relief of Louis XIV as a young man, dining-room table by Ruhlmann, and abstract paintings by Alexander Liberman—has given the room a panache it formerly lacked. And then what meals are served there! Thanks to the supervision of Pierre Bergé and the ministrations of a sublime chef, the food never fails to live up to the décor, so much so that in my experience Paris offers few pleasures to rival the simple epicureanism of the Saint Laurent table: *huîtres aux truffes, boeuf-môde en gelée,* and a magnificent Augsburg centerpiece on which to feast the eye.

The only room on the ground floor that has been in any sense decorated is a large hall which Claude Lalanne has transformed into a *cabinet de glaces.* Against a background of darkest aubergine lacquer she has set a series of huge looking glasses in elaborately chased frames that hark back in style, via the Art Nouveau of Maxim's, to the

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mirrored galleries of the Rococo—German rather than French. The ensemble is said to be unfinished, though it is hard to see what remains to be done. The equivocal nature of these mirrored panels would seem to be the perfect foil for stylistic contrasts, but for a change Saint Laurent has been faithful to one period: Art Deco. Besides the swagger armchairs and chaise longue by Ruhlmann, this room boasts a standard lamp by Rateau in the form of a rampant snake, an amazing carpet by Yvonne Fourneau improbably patterned with Provençal rooftops and an occasional table by Chareau loaded with Dunand vases.

On the floor below, the atmosphere changes. There is an equally spacious room but less lofty and marginally less treasure-filled than the salon: a library, a real one for reading. Modular white shelves to the ceiling are the only addition that has been made to this white room simply and elegantly furnished with modern sofas and armchairs covered in white duck. On the floor is a cigar-colored shag rug, which makes for informality rather than high stylishness. The twin glories of the library are the Mondrians—one of 1915, one of 1921—both of the first water. There is also an abundance of drawings by Saint Laurent's favorites—Picasso, Léger, and Matisse—and, hidden away in a corner, an exquisite landscape by the Douanier Rousseau. And don't miss the extraordinary conglomeration of treasures—above all, the many Attic red-figured vases—interspersed with personal memorabilia and photographs that share the shelves with an extensive library. No mere parade of bindings, this serviceable array of books testifies to the owner's literary predilections. Saint Laurent has such a passion for Proust that he has named the rooms of his Deauville house after the novelist's characters and on occasion has used the pseudonym "Mr. Swann" when traveling in America, but he also takes almost as much interest in modern French poetry and the classics as he does in modern French art. This interest is exemplified in the fashion collections—fall/winter of 1980–81, for example—he has dedicated to such poets as Jean Cocteau and Guillaume Apollinaire and, believe it or not, Shakespeare. Who can forget the pink dress included in Diana

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...aint Laurent retrospective ...Metropolitan Museum embroi... ...d with Cocteau's verse—shades of the way Miró inscribed 1920s paintings with fragments of Surrealist poetry?

Saint Laurent's collection of art has left its mark on his collection of clothes to the extent that his prestige as a collector entitles him, as a designer, to adapt motifs from the modern masters in a way that does him and them nothing but credit. Far from being shocked —as I once was—when he took Mondrian as the inspiration for his 1965 fall line (Madame Saint Laurent had given her son a book on the master), I now see these designs in the nature of a touching *hommage* rather than *lèse-majesté*. For Saint Laurent managed to impose the Dutchman's seemingly intractable geometry and primary colors onto a short white wool jersey dress so ingeniously that art and chic enhanced each other. But then, as Saint Laurent's choice of Mondrian's work subsequently revealed, he has a subtle understanding of what the artist was about.

The designer's love of Matisse is more in line with the demands of fashion, for this artist had designed silks for Poiret, and his wife had worked as a milliner. Moreover, in later life he had chosen a young seamstress, Lydia Delektorskaya, as an assistant—and subsequently mistress—because she knew how to cut a paper pattern and was thus able to help with *papiers découpés* (one of which hangs in Saint Laurent's library). Matisse also shared Saint Laurent's passion for Morocco. The "Matisse dresses" that he did in 1981 pay tribute to the artist he admires as well as the country where he and Bergé spend part of the year, presiding over the Jardin Majorelle.

As for Picasso, one feels that Paloma must have told her great friend Saint Laurent how her father had learned about embroidery from two old aunts who lived with his family and spent their days sewing gold braid onto the caps and uniforms of stationmasters. For Saint Laurent's elaborately embroidered "Picasso dresses" (1979–80), worn to such dazzling effect by Paloma, correspond very closely to Picasso's recently discovered designs for some of Luis Miguel Dominguín's *costumes de lumière*. But then we should not forget that of all the modern masters, Picasso had the sharpest eye for changes in fashion. Various portraits of his wives and mistresses deftly point up the wearer's pride in a Chanel dress, a Schiaparelli suit, or a Gérard Albouy hat. In the circumstances who better than Saint Laurent to return the compliment? This prodigious collection confirms that his genius for fashion is based on a profound understanding of the Modern movement and its forebears. □

Editor: Marie-Paule Pellé

AT HOME WITH THE FUTURE

(Continued from page 211) with the art. "The art comes first," she emphasizes. "The rest is background. The furniture must work with the art, not the other way around." Most of it is light, slightly Streamlined Moderne—with a few exceptions, such as the ornate Spanish desk in the foyer that belonged to her father, the industrial architect Albert Kahn, and several small chests, ranging from Italian Renaissance to early Dutch-American. In the living room are chairs and settees of Danish designer Hans Wegner made and bought in the early 1950s; on one table is a Noguchi lamp and Medardo Rosso's small 1889 bronze *Man in the Hospital;* on another, with several ceramics, including Picasso's witty sculpture *Female Figure* (circa 1951), is Mrs. Malbin's own pottery done in the 1940s.

Art and design come together in the rugs and ceramics. The library rug, Alexander Calder's *Yellow Circle,* is a late-1950s Aubusson edition; two early 1960s Picasso rugs, *Serrure ("Lock")* and *Blue Jacqueline,* put art on the floor in the living room and dressing room. The Picasso ceramics, including the standing sculptures *Owl* and *Female Figure* and a large plate decorated with a bull's head, were produced and bought in the early 1950s directly from Picasso's ceramic studio, the Atélier Madoura in Vallauris, France. Lydia Malbin has a master of fine arts degree from the Cranbrook Academy of Art (her father helped bring Eliel Saarinen to Cranbrook), where she studied between 1939 and 1943 under Maija Grotell. She organized ceramics programs for the Red Cross during World War II, has shown work at several galleries and museums, and produced designs for tableware, ashtrays, and vases that were part of the 1947 Saarinen-Swanson Group's furniture and design line.

The eldest daughter of Albert Kahn, Lydia Malbin was brought up surrounded by the works of Monet, Degas, Delacroix, Angelica Kauffman, J. B. Jongkind, and Adolphe Monticelli; they now hang in her bedroom and she sees her father's acquisitions as representing the past. Mrs. Malbin fondly recalls the Detroit home she grew up in. Designed by her father, it was perhaps the first residence made of reinforced concrete. Of special note was Kahn's addition of a second living room, sixty feet long, through which a distinguished array of visitors passed, including musicians Jascha Heifetz and Vladimir Horowitz and architects Frank Lloyd Wright, Eric Mendelsohn, and Eliel Saarinen. Although she had been sent to Vassar to prepare for a career in medicine, Mrs. Malbin decided on art, and she began collecting conservatively with old master prints in the mid 1930s and then plunged into more advanced art with pieces by Marc Chagall, Lyonel Feininger, Chaim Soutine, and Maurice de Vlaminck. She saw them as "what everybody first gets," but her father—despite the radicalism of some of his own architecture—was not pleased by this foray into the world of Modernism since he had little enthusiasm for contemporary art, regarding it as poorly drawn.

It was Alfred Stieglitz who gave Lydia Malbin the needed encouragement: he told her to collect what she wanted,



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the art in the bedroom if she had but follow her taste and passion. This was welcome advice from someone who Mrs. Malbin at first had found forbidding. On the recommendation of Dorothy Norman, Lydia Malbin had visited Stieglitz in 1937 at his American Place Gallery in New York. The fledgling collector's initial impression of Stieglitz was of an "old and crabby, strange and funny man" whose "long black cape and wild eyebrows that seemed to be growing out of his ears" made him look like "Satan himself." The spare space with white walls struck her as less an art gallery than a laboratory (what Stieglitz often called it). She had come to acquire a John Marin. Stieglitz sensed her seriousness and eventually sold her a watercolor at a very modest price. He gave her a book of Marin's letters, printed by the gallery, and inscribed it with a reference to this first meeting with Mrs. Malbin: "There has been a very wonderful honor at An American Place this morning." So began their friendship. In a letter written shortly before his death, Stieglitz allayed her fears that another Marin she owned was unsigned. Mrs. Malbin proudly attached it to the back of the painting: "This Marin is not 'signed.' Marin is written all over the watercolor. Signatures are easily forged. The watercolor not."

It was ten years ago that I had my first viewing of the collection. A museum curator told Mrs. Malbin of my interest in Italian Futurism, and she insisted I visit. This meeting led to many more, not only to view the works of art but also to consult the extensive archives and library. Eventually I began holding graduate Art History seminars on Italian Futurism in the apartment. But this was not the first seminar to be conducted in her home. For many years she lived in Birmingham, Michigan, near Detroit, and classes from neighboring colleges and informal symposia of local, national, and international members of the art world met regularly at her house. Her home has always been more of a forum for ideas than a mere showcase for the display of objects.

Mrs. Malbin affectionately recalled some of the adventures, or "missions" as Harry Winston drolly called them, to acquire pieces in the collection. In 1951 the dealer Kahnweiler sent them on a hunt for Severini, the only major Futurist artist they would meet. The mission took them to Paris, Rome, Meudon, up and down endless flights of stairs, and finally they met the artist, who was grateful for such attention at a time when the Futurists attracted scant notice. That year the Winstons bought their first Futurist work, one of Severini's extraordinary "plastic analogies," *Sea=Dancer (Dancer beside the Sea)* (1913–14), which the artist himself explained as "the sea with its dance. . . . Its zigzag movements and glittering contrasts of silver and emerald evokes in my plastic sensibility the far away vision of a dancer covered with sparkling sequins in her surroundings of lights, noises, and sounds." Afraid some of the sequins, which Severini had glued to the canvas, might come loose, the Winstons hand-carried the painting home, first by taxi from Paris to Cherbourg, then on the *Queen Elizabeth* back to the United States. *Sea=Dancer* now hangs in the middle of a living-room wall devoted almost exclusively to Futurism.

The following year the Winstons were on another mission, to Brancusi's studio in Paris where they bought *The Blond Negress* (1933), the first work sold from his studio in twenty years. "He didn't want to have anything to do with my husband," Mrs. Malbin recalls with a smile. "Brancusi made him sit on a log in the corner, while I sat on one side of Brancusi and smoked his old cigarettes and he told stories in a funny kind of babble." After many discussions, a deal was struck, to be sealed at a farewell meal prepared by Brancusi on the stone stove and served on the plaster table in his studio. In the midst of the celebration, Brancusi abruptly changed the bargain, demanding cash immediately. The Winstons agreed; Harry rushed to the bank and, with inflation running high in France, needed a suitcase to carry the francs to Brancusi. The artist rewarded them with a version of *The Kiss,* painted on an uncooked egg, now placed on a chest in the library. With time, it began to emit a rather strong odor, and Mrs. Malbin has had to protect the object from being discarded by those who felt its smell outweighed its aesthetics.

A pioneering spirit suffused Mrs. Malbin's collecting. Because of Futurism's associations with violence and

the radical politics of some of its members, the movement was treated gingerly by the art world. As the daughter of one of America's most inventive industrial architects, however, Mrs. Malbin particularly appreciated the Futurist's fascination with machines and technology. The automobile was a Futurist icon; her father was America's foremost architect of automobile factories, beginning with the Packard Motor Car Company in 1903 and continuing with General Motors, Chrysler, and Ford, including its mammoth River Rouge Plant (1917–39), still a renowned industrial complex. Several of Albert Kahn's architectural drawings hang in the bedroom, and his T-square is mounted on a library wall with other works in the collection. It's treated as an artist's creative tool, as are the palettes of Giacomo Balla and Umberto Boccioni, which hang in the dressing room and living room, respectively. "Though far from my father's concept of art, the enjoyment of the many works in [the] collection has come from his influence," Mrs. Malbin stated in a 1961 convocation address delivered at Wayne State University in Detroit at which both she and Marcel Duchamp received honorary degrees.

There were others in America who were fascinated by Futurism, and several were friends of Mrs. Malbin. One was Alfred Barr of The Museum of Modern Art, but his desire to purchase Futurist art for the museum was sometimes thwarted by the board of directors. Another was Rose Fried—a former secretary to Katherine Dreier and member of the Société Anonyme—who ran a private gallery in New York known as the Pinacotheca Gallery, later renamed the Rose Fried Gallery. From this gallery Mrs. Malbin acquired important works by Kurt Schwitters, Theo van Doesburg, El Lissitzky, Max Ernst, Duchamp, Arp, Wassily Kandinsky, Piet Mondrian, Pevsner, Gabo, Francis Picabia, and Morgan Russell; she also bought several pieces out of an important Futurist show in 1954. At Rose Fried's urging, Mrs. Malbin went to Europe to purchase works from Balla's daughters, Marinetti's widow, and Boccioni's sister, from whom she obtained a large and stunning collection of Boccioni drawings.

The Futurist holdings are remarkable in both range and quality. There are works by all the major Futurist artists—Balla, Boccioni, Severini, Luigi Russolo, and Carlo Carrà—and a sampling of some lesser-known and second-generation Futurists—Mario Sironi and Enrico Prampolini. Founded in Italy in 1909 by the poet Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, Futurism was a movement designed to change the course of life, not just the course of art, partly by challenging the boundaries that separated the two. Futurism, going beyond painting and sculpture, engaged in a variety of media. The Malbin collection accurately reflects this: there are drawings and collages, as well as "words in freedom," which are hybrids of art and literature in which words and letters, yanked out of traditional context, are stretched and twisted into abstract or representational shapes. Mixing onomatopeic language with visual pandemonium, they seem to shout obstreperously, as if visual art could now have sound too. There are designs for objects, such as Balla's playful polychromed wood models for "plastic-complex" trees and flowers, part of his artificial landscape (to be filled, naturally, with "metallic animals"), all components of his naively ambitious "Futurist Reconstruction of the Universe"; and there is a collection of manifestos, witty and belligerent documents that proclaimed the Futurist programs (many composed or ghosted by chief propagandist Marinetti), addressing all walks of art and life—painting and sculpture, to be sure, but also architecture, design, photography, film, theater, literature, music, dance, even radio, war, cooking, and love and lust.

Part of what pleases Mrs. Malbin about her manifestos is that several once belonged to the Synchromist painter Morgan Russell, represented in the collection by a charming, vibrantly colored oil, *Synchromy No. 2, To Light* (circa 1913), which hangs in a back hallway bursting with art. Russell's interest in Futurism confirms Mrs. Malbin's belief that many modern developments owe a great debt to the movement. Influences, connections, and interactions within modern art are of great importance to her, and works are carefully placed to illuminate affinities or contrasts. With some exceptions, the paintings in the living room



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by Balla, [illegible], Severini, Léger, Robert Delaunay, Picasso, Albert Gleizes, and Maria Blanchard present what might be called a Cubo-Futurist sensibility in which the Cubist vocabulary of fragmentation, transparency, and overlapping is used to express a dynamic vision of reality.

The roots of this vision are also demonstrated in provocative ways in this room. In one instance Balla's pre-Futurist *The Stairway of Farewells* (1908) reveals the Symbolist sources of Modernism. It may be inappropriate to speak of highlights in a collection filled with so many stars, but *The Stairway of Farewells* is quite unusual. It is groundbreaking in its radical viewpoint, showing from above an image of a staircase that seems to wind incessantly, with departing figures glancing upward. This nearly dizzying eddy achieves what was later to be a Futurist goal: "To put the spectator in the center of the picture."

In a corner of the living room Medardo Rosso's *Ecce Puer* (circa 1906–07), one of several of his wax-over-plaster sculptures in the collection, serves as an instructive counterpoint to nearby pieces. In an approach begun in the early 1890s, Rosso tried to incorporate thought and environment into the sculpture. Emotion and light shroud the work, obliterating facial detail. This extreme simplification looks ahead to Brancusi's essentialized sculptures, such as *The Blond Negress,* found in an identical position at the other side of the living-room window. Boccioni was to explore the impact of emotion and environment on sculpture, in works such as his famous *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space* (1913) and *Anti-Graceful* (1912), both placed conveniently near the Rosso. Boccioni's approach, energized by potent doses of Futurist adrenaline, is far more violent: in *Unique Forms,* a human-mechanical centaur strides forward like a crusader determined to convert civilization to the new religion of technology; in *Anti-Graceful,* thought and light do not dematerialize forms, but instead fragments of houses slash the head, and noises from the street are suggested through a face that buckles and up-heaves like a landscape struck by an earthquake.

The apartment is full of these thoughtful juxtapositions. In the living room is probably the best example from Balla's early 1910s series of abstractions called *Iridescent Interpenetration.* What differentiates this series from the first wave of abstraction practiced at the time is its hard-edged geometric symmetry, a style not fully explored until Minimal and Color-Field art of the 1960s. *Iridescent Interpenetration* is strategically placed on a wall by an opening that leads to a hallway of paintings by Mondrian, Stella, Louis, and Noland. Looking through that opening is like looking through a telephoto lens where near and far appear to collapse onto the same plane; works spanning a half-century unify into a single vision, and a definition of one strain of Modernism emerges.

Although Mrs. Malbin regards her collection as an adventure and an education, she also considers it both a privilege and a responsibility. She has never sold or traded a work, only given pieces to museums. Because of her commitment to sharing, most of the rest of the collection, one assumes, will ultimately go to museums. "The serious collector should be of great value to the museums," Lydia Winston Malbin has said. "His choices, if well selected, eventually . . . will find their way there. Someone has chosen, lived with, cared for, and loved these works . . . and they should be enjoyed by the world." □ *Editor: Jacqueline Gonnet*

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SISTER'S NEW ROOMS

(Continued from page 154) On three walls hang large and vivid chinoiserie panels on canvas taken from a house in Provence. Sister has a special gift for plump, brilliant, tempting pillows so that it is hard to pass one of her chairs without sinking into it. And she is a dab hand at swags and pelmets. Where other designers often suffocate a room in sheer excess of fabric, her effects, if rich, are also light.

It is commonplace to say her taste is based on English models. Certainly she

has been a lifelong friend of English designers such as Sybil Colefax and Nancy Lancaster, but in reality all that she shares with such colleagues is a luminous sense of comfort and color. True, there is effectively no such thing as a specific English taste. Unlike French or Italian or German houses, the better houses of Britain have seldom been tamed by an expert, and until the 1930s almost never. They just grew around their owners, who might or might not match an acquisitive sense with a sense of decorum.

But Sister, like the best of her European contemporaries, is a creator of harmonies. Her chintzes set off the flowers that are everywhere, and both are scaled to human use and relaxation. She does not aim to create a Brideshead, the evocation of a gasp, but to fit livable rooms to those who live in them.

But because people are different, her houses are different, too. She does not design the same rooms for Mrs. Charles Engelhard and Mrs. Gordon Getty, for Mrs. Jock Whitney and Mrs. Robert Charles. Moreover, she is usually right in her judgments, her clients confess. She does not bully them, she overrides their objections and in the end compels them to be grateful. The rooms she designed for Mrs. Charles in Washington are a case in point. Mrs. Charles had ideas of her own and fought for them at first. "But in the end," she told me, "with Sister one has to eat humble pie." And it is made easier by Sister's attitude, which on the surface appears relaxed. As an example, she wanted Mrs. Charles to buy a Russian chandelier of great splendor. A photograph was submitted, and Mrs. Charles was enthusiastic. Only then did Sister look at the dimensions noted on the photograph and found that the chandelier was six feet high and overwhelming in diameter. This human oversight cheered up both the ladies and made it psychologically easier for Sister to do elsewhere just as she wished.

She is an infectious teacher, too. The wives of the American rich often earn a niche for themselves in art history by becoming truly expert as collectors. Mrs. Charles Wrightsman is an obvious example. The pattern is to start without an excess of knowledge or interest, then to be enthralled by the possibilities of scholarship. After a few years working with Sister, others, including Mrs. Gordon Getty, have succumbed to the same enthusiasm.

There is nothing dry-as-dust about Sister's scholarship. She plays it down perhaps, but it backs her every design. Mrs. Charles once used a phrase about Sister's rooms. "They are so inviting," she said. It would be hard to pay a greater compliment.

I suppose that the principles of modern decoration rest very largely on the work of Edith Wharton and Ogden Codman. In the nineteenth century a room was admired too often because it was crowded and expensive: we have only to look at Sandringham in the days of Queen Alexandra, with its palms in Japanese pots, Fabergé fancies, and extravagant pieces of sculpture with titles like *Puck on a Toadstool*. Later, simplicity took over. This was an aesthetic improvement certainly but seldom a source of practical pleasure: no chairs were ever less comfortable than the now much-admired chairs of Charles Rennie Mackintosh, for one thing. French paneled rooms and the white furnishings of Syrie Maugham took the world by storm. But it was Sister who first perfected the art of the inviting. Her rooms beckon to the beholder.

Mrs. Parish has a country home in Dark Harbor, Maine, and here one of the sources of her inspiration becomes plain. She brings the country to the city, for it is evident that she is at heart a country person. The houses she has designed for Mrs. Vincent Astor show this clearly. She can be as grand as anybody, but she is most at home in a world of flowers and summer delights, and these she brings back to the city with her. Typically she is deeply devoted to her now-grown children.

Fifth Avenue is not meadowlike, nor by its nature serene. But right there in her little paved yard, with its impatiens gleaming in a shady corner, she has transplanted a touch of country living to an apartment for which, I repeat, inviting is the word. □

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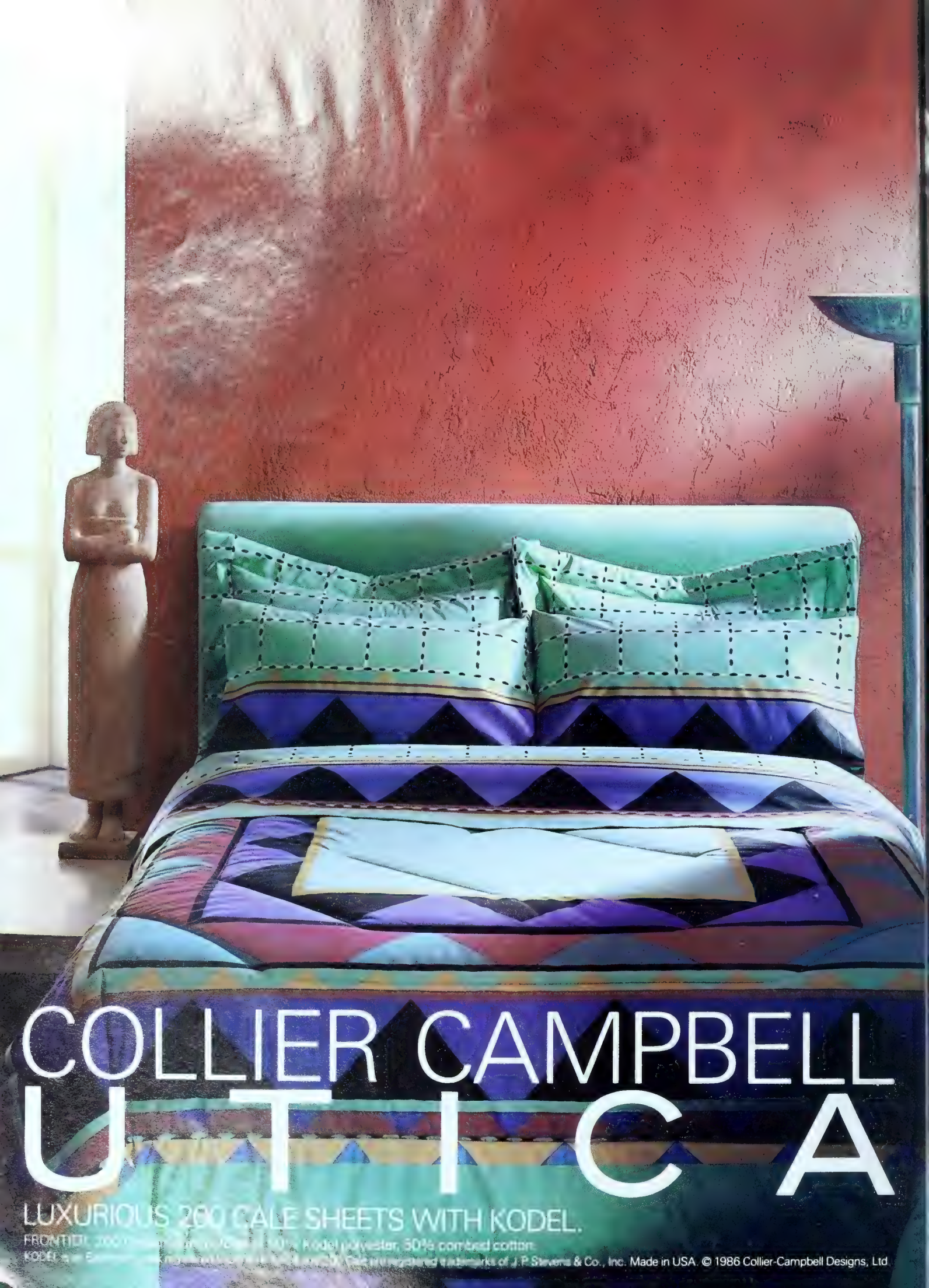
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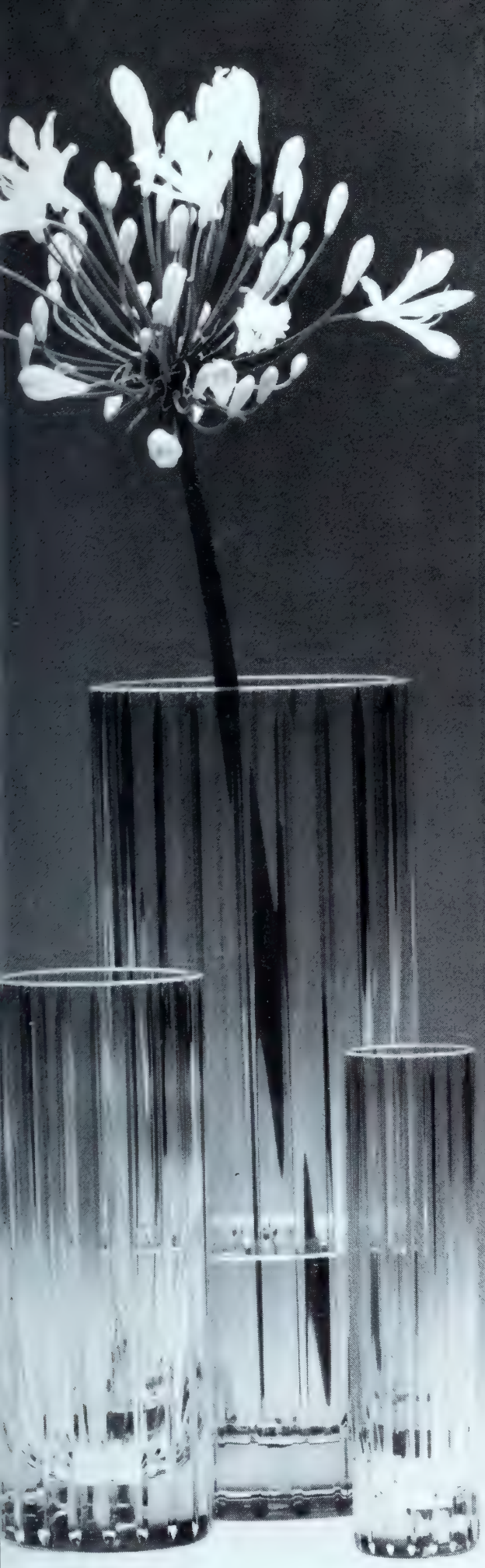
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Detail of a huge silver centerpiece celebrating the hunt and weighing over 70 kilos, begun by Thomas Germain in 1730 and completed by his son. More on the Portuguese royal silver collection from the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga in Lisbon on page 182. Photograph by Oberto Gili.

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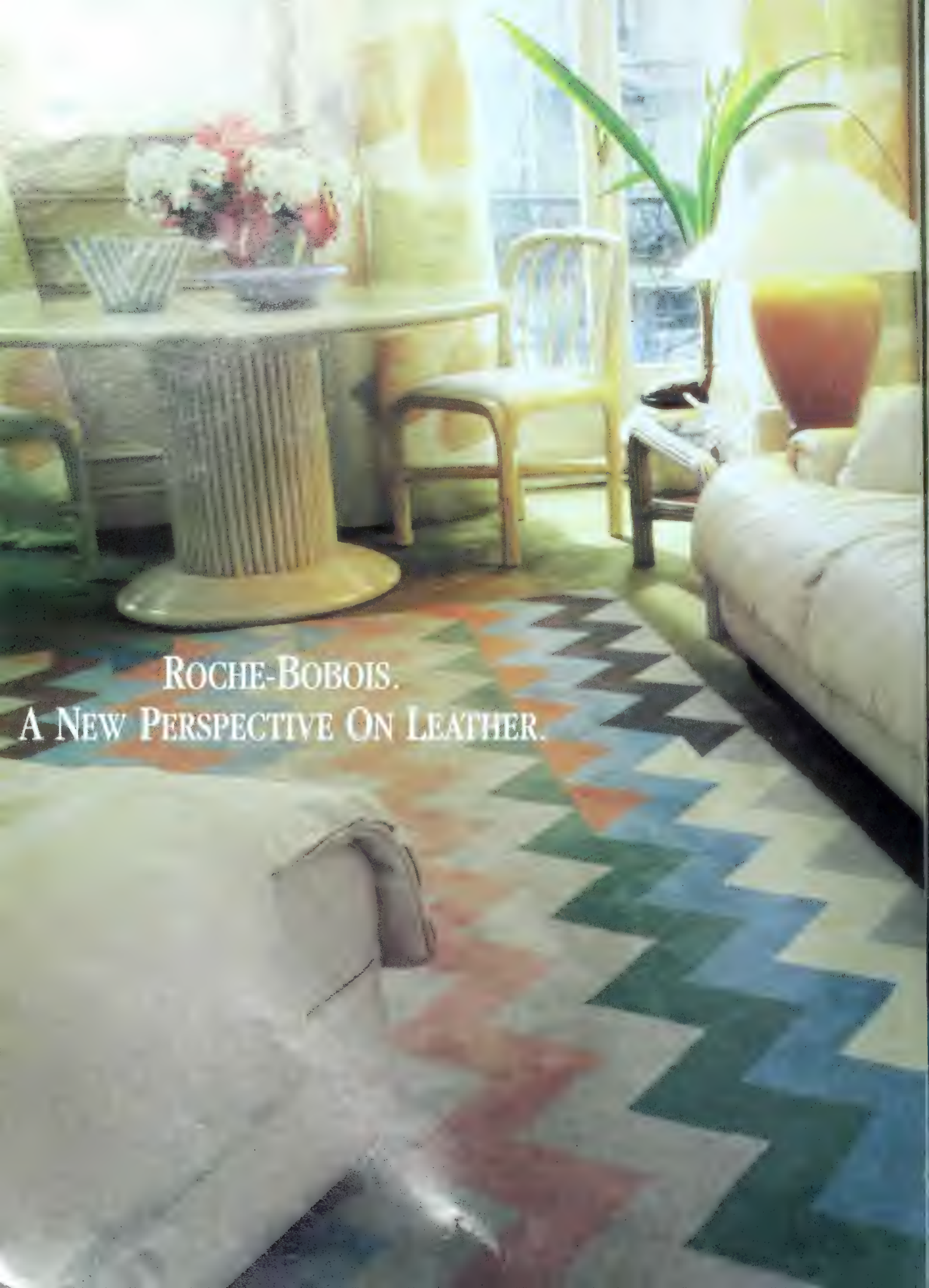
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EDWARD LEBOW writes about art and is working on a biography of the late Marian Willard.

JAMES LEES-MILNE is the author of over thirty books, including a biography of Harold Nicholson. A biography of Viscount Esher, confidant of King Edward VII, was published last month by Sigwick & Jackson.

LEO LERMAN is editorial adviser to The Condé Nast Publications.

SUSAN S. H. LITTLEFIELD is a writer with a degree in landscape architecture.

WILLIAM BRYANT LOGAN conceived and edited *Garden Design.* He is the author of *A Book of Roses.*

MICHAEL TEAGUE is a writer and photographer who has lived for some years in both Portugal and Brazil.

DONOVAN WEBSTER is the assistant editor of *Southern* magazine.



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At a party on New York's East Side recently, it was a Westsider who most piqued my interest. The guest was Christopher Whittle, chief of Whittle Communications and chairman of *Esquire* magazine. Beyond being interested in meeting the man who could explain what went wrong with my high-school annual's prediction that I would be editor of *Esquire,* I wanted to congratulate him on his spectacular apartment in New York's famed Dakota, page 152, rooms that show the same commitment and intensity that made this young man from Tennessee a whiz-kid partner in a publishing empire while he was still in college.

Whittle's goals in the decoration of his apartment might not have been realized without the supreme skills of Peter Marino, the much-sought-after architect/interior designer whose apartment for Whittle teaches us many an important decorating lesson in this decorating-packed November issue.



Karen Radkai's photograph of a private dining spot in the apartment shown on page 168.

Also in New York, a beautiful decorating project by Fleming and Irvine on Manhattan's East Side gives us an opportunity to do a bit of philosophizing about "English Country" with a longtime practitioner of this popular decorating style. Scottish-born and English-trained, Keith Irvine has been based in America for almost thirty years now, and he has some surprising things to say about the comfort of English country life as he reflects on rooms he did in collaboration with his associate Sam Blount (a young decorating talent to watch), page 168.

In between these two very professional decorating projects we placed a house created by professionals of another sort, dancer Nora Kaye and director (among other appellations) Herbert Ross. Filled with objects both fine and kitsch, their Los Angeles house has a character as distinctive as its owners.

Writing about his longtime friends the Rosses reminded Leo Lerman that he had not written a story for House & Garden since 1948. Contributing editor of *Mademoiselle,* the features editor of *Vogue,* and onetime editor-in-chief of *Vanity Fair* in the intervening years, he is now editorial adviser to all of us at Condé Nast. We are sure that when you read his text, page 160, you'll be as glad as we are that he has ended his almost forty-year absence from House & Garden's pages.

In a decorating-filled issue it is particularly appropriate to have an example of the work of Robert Adam, the eighteenth-century architect who more than anyone else understood the relationship between architecture and decoration. Kedleston Hall, page 238, is a project he built in his prime, just after returning from the Italian tour that was so influential in forming the Roman taste of this formidably talented Englishman.

It is also appropriate that so many of our stories should have been photographed by Karen Radkai, a photographer for *Vogue* and House & Garden who brings in many of the most evocative decorating photographs we publish. This issue gives witness with Perfect Placement, page 160, A Comfortable Affinity, page 168, Poet's Corner, page 176, and The Indomitable Elisabeth Draper, page 192.

Occasionally we get a letter asking us why we don't ever photograph a typical suburban house, showing the ordinary structures many people live in. In fact we do. It's just that when the mission has been accomplished, no one recognizes such a project as the bland suburban house it was. This kind of transformation was accomplished by Pauline Feldman and William Diamond in the house photographed by François Halard on page 218. Senior writer Elaine Greene couldn't have been better equipped to write the story, for William Diamond is also doing her New York City apartment—which, by the way, was never bland.

Lou Gropp

Editor-in-Chief

VISIONARIES



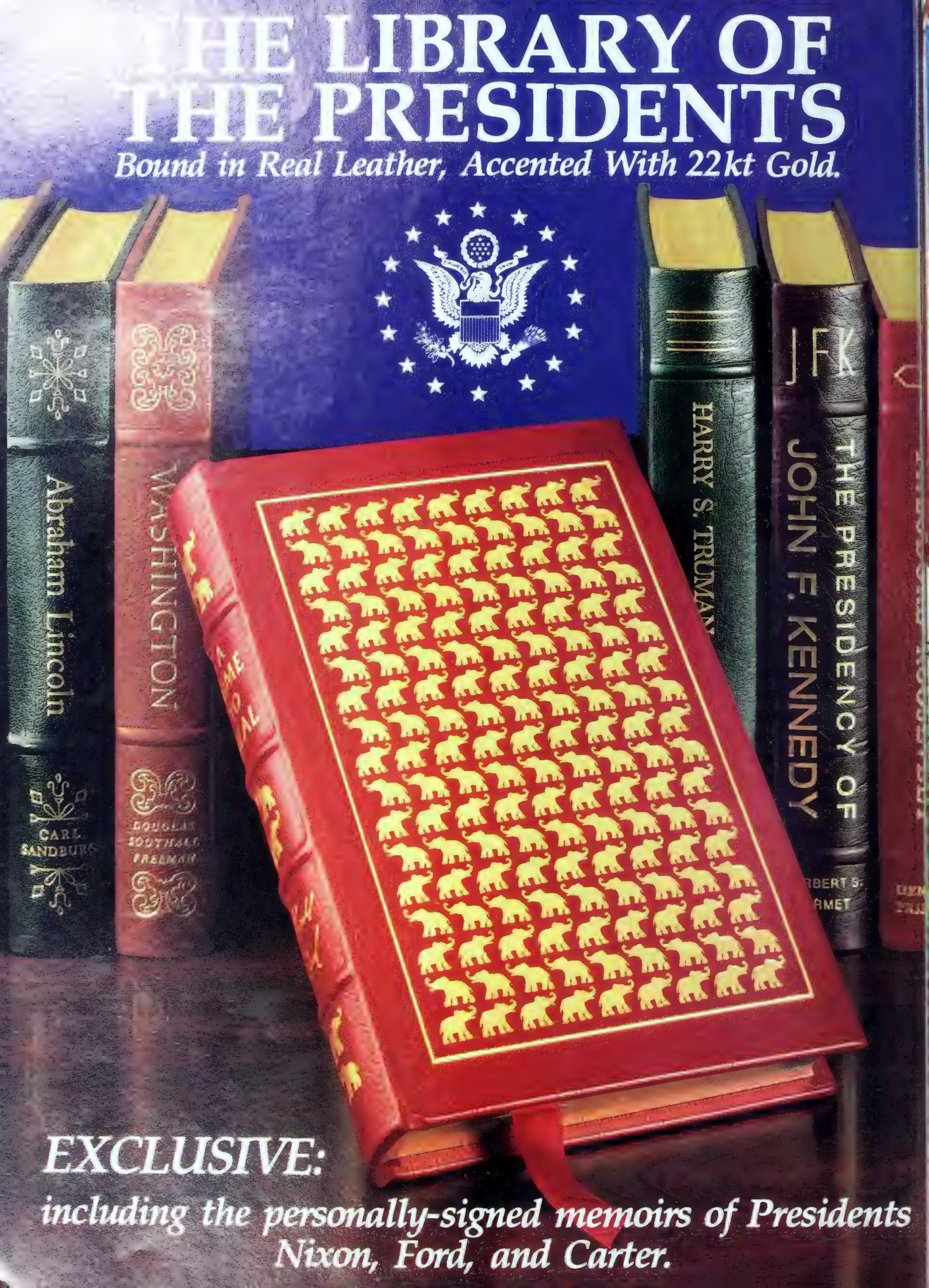
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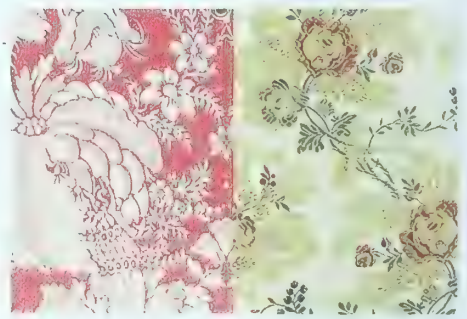
By Mark Hampton

For many people, the word *rich* implies an excess that is tasteless and unattractive, and they take great pains to avoid giving such appearance. The word itself may be avoided, except when referring to gravy perhaps, and even then it is often pejorative. Nancy Mitford chided us for the substitution of the word *wealthy* when speaking of the rich; she considered it a hopelessly middle-class euphemism.

In decorating, an awful lot of people just cannot handle rich materials, which seem to them to represent gauche excess and a violation of our old-fashioned love of restraint and self-discipline. Worse still, many people attempt their use and fail, achieving results that are more reminiscent of King Farouk's palace than *The House in Good Taste* (that invaluable guide ghost-written by Ruby Ross Wood for Elsie de Wolfe).

Of course it is not unnatural for Americans to be wary of richness, but in spite of our Puritanical tradition of shunning luxurious worldly trappings, there have occurred, off and on in our history, several periods of lavish design. I suppose they always had to do (and still have to do) with strong economic factors and weak spiritual ones. Think of all those New England shipping magnates getting rich off molasses, slaves, and rum. Their houses gradually lost the characteristic plainness of their more devout forebears. All over the country, cut velvets and brocades and brocatelles and damasks were added to the decorating vocabulary of prosperous people who had previously found them too foreign and opulent to be considered appropriate. It seems that exoticness, once thought unattractive, became a positive aspect of these terribly rich materials and their uses. Turkish, Chinese, and Moroccan nooks and corners appeared from Newport to San Francisco, and by the end of the nineteenth century the variety of ornate styles in common use by architects and decorating companies is almost beyond cataloguing.

Most of the reaction to the confusing and often truly hideous richness of late Victorian decoration was characterized by conservatism and restraint, qualities that reminded us of our straitlaced past and have always had a big appeal in America. One sure sign of this restraint was the infrequency of the use of brocades and cut and voided velvets. Instead, richness was limited to a small group of materials—plain velvet (probably not silk) and the large range of damasks, which can be very subtle. Then the Modern movement came along with its even more stringent view of what was allowed. The "don'ts" outnumbered the "do's." We are, at present, going through a reaction to *that* period. When you have had it with such cheerless admonishments as "Less is more" and "Form follows function" then you probably want to turn to the more sensuous realm of silk velvet and brocade.



A damask and a brocade from Brunschwig



JACQUES DIRAND

When the Baron and Baroness Guy de Rothschild moved to New York, *above,* the late Geoffrey Bennison helped them also move the famous *style Rothschild,* which is based on old and sumptuous materials.

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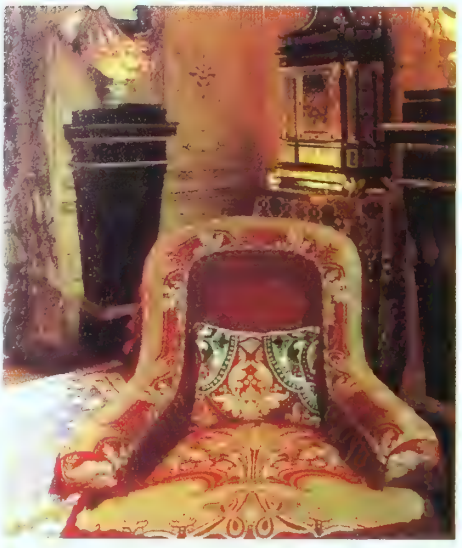


If you head off in this direction, however, you had better be careful because there is a whole history of vulgarians lurking in the shadows. Concentrate not on the complicated and often difficult-to-decipher movements of the past 125 years but on the earlier, seminal periods of architecture—periods during which architecture and decoration were totally integrated. If you study some of the still-existing William Kent interiors, you will see architectural plasterwork and furniture carving designed by the same hand. You will also see fabulous damasks and velvets, some of which are completely original. The same is true of Rococo rooms in which the paneling and the brocades used on the furniture covers were carefully related in color and design. Robert Adam's interiors incorporated carpets and fabrics that exactly repeated the motifs of his architecture. This interrelation of rich fabric to the architecture in which it was placed is enormously interesting. It also enables you to understand what was originally intended.

Another area of study that is hugely illuminating is the decoration of some of the more chaste Edwardians—Edith Wharton and Ogden Codman, Stanford White and Elsie de Wolfe, for example. They combined American discipline with a love of richness and comfort. They also understood the fundamentals of historical styles.

We are so bombarded by trends in our time that it is sometimes difficult to figure out what is going on. There is a kind of kangaroo feeling as one jumps from the Vienna Secession to the Second Empire, or from the Bauhaus to the Biedermeier, but this nervous switching about is bound to be a more or less permanent condition because we live in an era of knowledgeable interest in correct restoration and revival. This insistence on correctness should certainly extend to fabrics and their intended uses. In all periods of decoration, there exist materials that are precious, beautiful, and, like many valuable things, long lasting.

French rooms, I would guess, are the ones that leap to most people's minds when the topic of rich fabrics comes up—whether they are centuries old or of recent vintage. After World War II and the prior years of Depression, grand decorating took off again with a bang in France. It is astonishing to me, when I pore over books of French interior decoration of 25 years ago, to see the extraordinarily beautiful materials that were so boldly used. One room stands out in particular and for two reasons. First, because the rich materials play a singularly important role since there were (the room no longer exists) no outstanding boiseries or architectural details and, second, because Hubert de Givenchy, whose taste is phenomenal, once said that it was one of the most beautiful rooms he had ever seen. It was designed by Georges Geffroy for the vicomte and vicomtesse de Bonchamps, and it is easy to describe. The walls, including the deep cove molding around the top of the room were completely upholstered in narrow-width (thirty inches or so) green silk velvet. There is nothing more luxurious than silk velvet. Unfortunately, there are few things more expensive either. At $150 a yard, and narrow width at that, it is a very extravagant material to use. It is, however, often more beautiful after a number of years than it is when new. In any case, the late M. Geffroy placed in front of these green velvet walls upholstered furniture covered in cognac-colored silk velvet with inserts and cushions of that marvelous French velvet (still available today) woven in a tiger pattern. The curtains were very simple with no trim and no visible poles or rings; they were merely a continuation of the walls. The room was severe and rich at the same time.



A fireside chair at the Rothschilds

Walls covered in linen or cotton velvet, if not quite as remarkable as those covered in silk velvet, are nevertheless very beautiful too. Another important thing to consider about velvet walls is the fact that they do not show marks. A few months ago, I was in a house I decorated in 1969 and the brick-colored velvet walls in the library looked as good as new. Around the turn of the century, Stanford White was fond of covering walls with old worn silk velvet taken from palaces in Italy.

Even more extravagant than silk velvet, but more limited in its use, is the large range of brocades. Along with the astronomical cost of brocade come two bits of good news. It is very long lasting and it doesn't show spots. Therefore, it is terrific for chairs and pillows. In the eighteenth century, of course, it was used on walls, often set into panels. That taste is a little remote these days. It would also require a Croesus to afford it. But finely carved French or English or Italian chairs and settees are marvelous covered in brocade. Something to avoid, I would suggest, is the use of splendid brocade on indifferently made furniture, especially incorrectly made reproductions. The subject of reproductions is a thorny one. For those of you who simply will not discuss them, please look the other way for a minute while I say that there are, as a matter of fact, some very good reproductions. Many of the good ones are actually quite old themselves, and some of the best ones, alas, are passed off for or honestly thought to be antiques. They must be dealt with, however, because most historically inspired decoration simply has to include some reproduction furniture. Why not do the best you can, then, and not be tricked into owning really unacceptable reproductions? Good reproduction chairs, like good antique chairs, lend themselves very well indeed to the use of rich materials.

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They can be strongly designed or delicate. They can be stripped, painted, or gilded (or all three). In any case, they can be covered in some gorgeous material and they will then continue to look good for a long time. It is important to remember how hard it is on a chair frame to be reupholstered. All that hammering and nailing takes its toll. You should see the regluing and reinforcing that upholsterers have to go through in the recovering of some old chair frames. Therefore, if you are interested in the long life of your good furniture, you should cover your more fragile pieces in strong materials that will last, not flimsy stuff that wears out in a couple of years. Brocade can be very strong and can last an unbelievable length of time. Sunlight is the great threat, since it not only fades silk but it rots it, and surprisingly fast, too.

Another terrific place for brocade is on pillows. Actually, pillows are a perfect way to use very elaborate materials, especially fragments of antique needlework and tapestry. Be careful—it is treacherously easy to overdo it and come off looking like a fortune-teller surrounded by worn-out scraps outlined in tassel fringe. There is also the question of pillows made of bits of old carpets—Aubusson being the favorite. Personally, I don't much like lounging on a pillow that is made of some stuff that used to be on the floor. Skirted tables are also beautiful when they are draped in brocade or damask, and they too enable you to use old materials. You can even seam them in awkward ways that would never do on upholstery but that get lost in the folds of a tablecloth. And you don't have to think about the wasteful practice of matching repeats.

There are many reasons for loving rich materials: they are often beautiful, rare, ornamental, durable, evocative of a happy past, and grand. And in the grandeur lies the danger. Rich materials should look patrician, not nouveau riche. The one threat is that of looking pretentious—the single greatest vulgarity in interior decoration is pretentiousness. Understatement is a pain in the neck sometimes, but it is a good thing to keep in mind even when you are contemplating some ravishing excess. Where rich materials are concerned, good judgment is required. Fortunately, a lot of money is required, too, and that usually inspires caution. □



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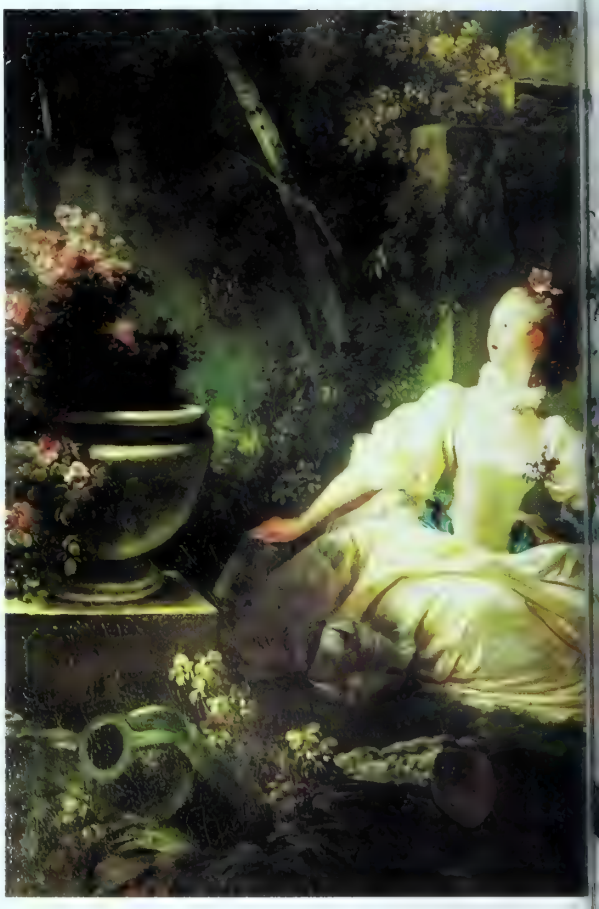
ALL ABOUT STYLE

By Nancy Richardson



RICHARD BRYANT

17th- and 18th-century artists' bouquets found good looks in calculated disarray and evanescence. In the best bouquets half the flowers were out of water



What brings a room to life more than its proportions, furniture, or pictures is often a matter of ephemeral things—flowers, branches, potted plants, bowls of fruit. And though they don't last they're no easier to get right from a design point of view than the color of the walls or what should go on the mantel. Where do you go for inspiration? Not to the expected sources certainly. Books of flower arranging from forty years ago and even pages from fashionable magazines from the eighteenth century would lead us to think that conventional ways of doing flowers have always looked stiff. And perhaps it is the case that the best ways of decorating with flowers have never come from the history of taste but from the history of art. When it comes down to it, haven't artists always made better bouquets than everybody else? Even at a distance of several hundred years and without the benefit of accompanying text one good flower painting offers more ideas than most treatises aimed directly at the topic. That is not to say, however, that we ought to proceed without caution to our own rooms and administer to them a dozen self-conscious fruit, flower, and potted-plant still lifes in the manner of Cézanne. First you need to separate flower paintings from paintings that happen to include some flowers. To try and emulate Monet's chrysanthemum bouquets wouldn't make for more attractive chrysanthemums at home. Monet was interested not in chrysanthemums but in light. His model might have been a very dull bouquet. Chardin's still lifes also transcended their subject matter, though his choice of objects revealed a practical aesthetic sense. Odilon Redon's bouquets were about abstracted forms and the back of his mind rather than flowers, vases, and backgrounds. It is more rewarding to look to artists whose motive was to record and delight. Certainly seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish painters—Cornelis and Jan Davidsz. de Heem, Ambrosius Bosschaert the Elder and Younger, Jan Brueghel, Daniel Seghers, Nicolaes van Veerendael, Clara Peeters—all had a firm grip on what a mixed bouquet should look like. In the beginning their bou-

Above: Detail, *Spring,* François Boucher, the Frick Collection. *Below: Roses and a Glass Jug,* Fantin-Latour.





Top: The Meeting, Jean-Honoré Fragonard, the Frick Collection. *Above: Tazza,* Jan Brueghel the Younger, collection of Rudolf Pallamar, Vienna.


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teenth century paintings of open-sided baskets or of shallow-bowled tazzas in which there was not only no water but the flowers weren't even put in stem first, much less "arranged." Disarray was the organizing device. Today those with a garden to visit right before dinner might easily do the same. Dutch and French eighteenth-century still-life painters such as Rachel Ruysch, Jan van Huysum, and Anne Vallayer Coster seem to sum up all the best of what the Dutch had figured out in the previous hundred years. They had weeded out the cuter *vanitas* symbols—bugs, lizards, skulls, timepieces—focused on an asymmetrical silhouette taking care to look for flowers where there was a lot of movement in the stem, avoided cutting all the roses, say, with stems the same length, got as much going on along the sides of the vases as coming out of the top. Flowers were chosen for contrasts of color, texture, and shape. Most bouquets included every color, but with white or pale colors predominating. Not just eighteenth-century still-life art but French art in general also has something to teach about flowers. It has little to do with bouquets and everything to do with a richer, giddier way of decorating with flowers which couldn't have been more contrived. The landscapes of Watteau are so mannered that they look more like a cross between a stage set and a giant flower arrangement than a garden. The French way of decorating with flowers was also about disarray but on a scale and of a fantasy more difficult to copy than the disarray of a seventeenth-century Dutch bouquet where everything else about a Dutch room was neat as a pin. The French taste had to do with a stylish mess that was carried on indoors and out and rarely confined itself just to vases or flower beds. Boucher, for instance, was constantly painting flowers in a state of such ripe perfection that only Madame de Pompadour's mammoth greenhouse operation could have produced them in adequate profusion. Boucher's flowers were not necessarily big and showy. In his portraits of Madame de Pompadour there is always a sprig of something in her hair, a nosegay of a different couple of sprigs at her neckline and roses strewn across the floor or the ground at her feet. There is no echo of sadness or sense of time passing in Boucher's flowers. He gives lesson after lesson in sweet colors, reminds us of the appeal of blue-green foliage, of roses with translucent petals—cabbage, shrub, and climbing roses. When finally you see Boucher's flowers *in* some container, it's usually a basket, but one that never went to market. The girl who symbolizes Spring in the paintings of *The Four Seasons* at the Frick Collection carries a basket filled with short-stemmed flowers face-up which are perched on top of a cushion of plump little unbotanical leaves. The basket's edge and its handle are bound with blue ribbon. Perhaps Boucher liked blue ribbon for the same reason he liked a few blue flowers in a bouquet that was mostly pink. Fragonard was even less a botanist than Boucher, but his paintings offer more specific ideas. At the Frick Collection, in *The Lover Crowned*, one of a series of decorative panels painted for Madame du Barry's salon at Louveciennes, the protagonist could easily be the orange tree planted in a Versailles tub near the top of the picture. It is underplanted with a pink shrub rose that fills in the space around the slender trunk of the tree and then tumbles out over one side. *The Meeting,* a panel in the same series, shows another unstaked pink shrub rose falling out of a stone urn. In *The Love Letter,* at the Metropolitan Museum, Fragonard has painted a girl looking over her shoulder as she holds up a tiny nosegay of flowers wrapped in paper. We are reminded in a flash of the ability of a fragile handful of flowers wrapped in something crinkly to evoke more emotion than huge cellophane-covered bouquets built to last. In that particular social order the greatest luxury seemed to lie in the abundant use of flowers, lace, ribbon, and anything else that was fragile. Eighteenth-century French art also records some interesting attitudes toward vases and other devices for the display of both flowers and fruit. In a large still life by A.-F. Desportes, flowers and fruit—some whole, some sliced open—are arranged together on big vermeil serving dishes. Reflecting the setting as effectively as a mirror would are larger vermeil platters propped up against the wall. What Dutch seventeenth-century flowerpiece painters did for blue-and-white delft pitchers, eighteenth-century French artists did for precious



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flowerpots—Renaissance bronze vases, porcelain urns made by Sèvres and Vincennes, as well as Chinese porcelain jars mounted in gilt bronze. There were flowers painted all over the porcelain as well as flowers made out of porcelain. Perhaps it was the result of a distaste for treating precious things in a precious way that inspired court painters to show vases tipped over, small tables with their drawers open, books open and face down on the floor, and flowers scattered every place. One of the nicest examples today of a precious vase used in a way the eighteenth century would have enjoyed is at the Frick Collection. The Sèvres vase under the Drouais portrait of the young *Comte et Chevalier de Choiseul Dressed as Savoyards* is fitted with a soldered-lead liner. In it the Frick's director, Everett Fahy, arranges iceberg roses, ivy, carnations, peonies—flowers both from the Frick's cutting garden and from the commercial flower market—in a loose, open horizontal arrangement that doesn't block the painting. In the second half of the century some of the best talent went off to make chinoiserie and later Neoclassic decorations that were as decorative as flowerpieces and still lifes but had little to do with them. How did the late eighteenth century use flowers? Not certainly with the extravagance of the French court and court painters. Early-nineteenth-century artists' views of interiors of high-ranking, even royal, families show an invasion of potted plants. Sometimes they made a solid wall of ivy, a *Zimmerlaube,* between one part of a room and another, sometimes they burst out of high mahogany planters, many sat in pots on the outside ledge of the window, and sometimes three plants in terra-cotta pots filled a fireplace. Many interior views show a small mixed bouquet to one side of a large clock on the mantel, but they were bouquets that had ceased to be stars in life or art. Later in the nineteenth century they make a big comeback as simple, modern bouquets from the garden which take their style from a lack of pretension. In Fantin-Latour's *Roses and a Glass Jug* at the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Lyons the blue glass pitcher is complete in itself, as is the group of *Rosa centifolia* lying stems away on a marble shelf. Not one of those blooms would have looked like anything the next day even if put in water, but it was at that point that the artist found them the most beautiful. Even in the Fantin-Latour paintings in which the roses got put in vases, one blossom has usually fallen out and the bouquet thereby gains a pleasing disheveled appearance. Perhaps the flowers were plopped into the vase all at once and given a couple of shakes rather than being "artfully" arranged one by one. Many of his still lifes expand the bouquet idea to include potted plants—one always smaller than the other. Sometimes the potted plants were big and set on the floor next to a table with a small bouquet of flowers and a larger flowering plant side-by-side on top. It is a combination of plants, fruit, and flowers that reminds us of what Cézanne did thirty years later. Even so, it is Fantin-Latour's interpretation that nerves the attempt to re-create such a still life on a simple dining table in the country. On the other hand Manet inadvertently combines major art with some interesting information in numerous pictures based on the simplest of flowers and the most guileless everyday arrangements. Manet painted sixteen different paintings of flowers in the last two years of his life, and they are the subject of a new book, *The Last Flowers of Manet* by Robert Gordon and Andrew Forge (Abrams). No longer able to attempt larger canvases, he took to painting these little bouquets, presents from friends who came to visit him. Some of the flowers might have come from a garden, but surely most came from the florist. Their particular charm is that Manet had no shining knack or even the energy at that point to arrange flowers. The stems were left long and we see all of them including their submerged leaves in inches of water in the clear glass vase. At the top the flowers are a third again the height of the vase—the reverse of a Dutch bouquet, which is all top and no base—but the Manet bouquets are of the sort we are much more likely to get right. Interestingly nineteenth-century prints remind us that the nineteenth century in general admired the bouquets of the seventeenth century to the less elaborate ones of Manet and Fantin-Latour. There are a few charming exceptions—among them the Japanese prints done in the 1860s, when Western styles were being promoted at



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home by the Japanese emperor. In the center panel of a triptych by Hashimoto Chikanobu the eight-year-old Japanese crown prince is dressed as if he were a child of Napoleon III. Behind him is a large baluster-shaped Japanese enamel jar mounted in gilt bronze and completely in the Second Empire taste. Out of the top of this vase come branches of cherry, magnolia, tree peony, and a camellia or two in an analine scarlet color—a unique Japanese version of a Western bouquet. At a glance we see how handsome this or any elephantine vase can be when filled with branches of a suitable scale. (This triptych of the Japanese imperial family is from Lincoln Kirstein's collection of nineteenth-century popular Japanese prints shown in an exhibition last summer at the Metropolitan Museum. Catalogue available at the Met's bookshop.) Nothing, however, has spoken more to contemporary taste in the art of the last hundred years than the bold Impressionist bouquet made up of a single kind of flower. The ultimate example, though a Post-Impressionist one, may be Van Gogh's painting of a pitcher full of German irises—clearly the bouquet of someone in torment. It's as if the jar of flowers had been spun around before he painted it, such is the sense of centrifugal force, of flowers about to be flung out all over the room. What else could have caused the bouquet to separate, regroup, and settle back down so that there is no trace of a florist or arranger left? If there is one book that easily serves as a guide to what is to be learned from how artists have liked their flowers, it is Everett Fahy's *Metropolitan Flowers* (Abrams). As an art historian who long ago established the intellectual and visual link between gardens, flowers, and art, Mr. Fahy offers us the additional dimension of knowing a good deal about flowers. From him and from plantsman and landscape gardener Jerry Wilson to whom I turned to find out which flowers were which in various paintings, I learned that botanists will rarely make a definite identification of a flower from a painting. What delighted both men, however, was that artists have always taken great license when painting flowers—which is what we ought to do when we arrange them. □



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OF HORNS AND HOUNDS

The unspeakable in full pursuit of the uneatable

By Simon Blow

Most English children brought up in the country learn to ride. And once you have learned to ride you will hunt. For growing up in the country nobody rides just for the pleasure of hacking—that is an urban attitude—you are taught to ride because it is a necessary preliminary to hunting. Go, for instance, to any meet during a Christmas holiday and, surprisingly, you will not find the scene very much changed from a hundred years ago. The modern age has found no equivalent excitement for England's rural young; fox hunting has remained the objective. The remark made by a young Somerset from Badminton in the last century still holds good: "We are not allowed to hunt more than three times a week till we are five years old."

I also began to hunt as a child, although I did not start as early as those Somersets. Both my parents came from country backgrounds; my mother grew up in Yorkshire and my father in Gloucestershire. We lived in London but stayed constantly with their respective families; and with both families there was hunting. The two families, though, were quite different. And their difference provided an added stimulant to my early addiction to the sport. My father's family house had been recently built in 1914. It was a stone manor house designed on romantic principles by my grandfather, Detmar Blow, who was a leading country-house architect in Edwardian England. Detmar Blow was a friend of William Morris and a disciple of his rustic ideals; as a young architect he had driven Morris's funeral cart dressed in a wagoner's smock. So the house that he built for himself and his family was meant to reflect Morris's back-to-the-land dream, but carried out on a squirearchal level. My grandfather became the benevolent squire of an estate of happy tenants. In the evenings he would play the old country dances to them on his fiddle. Growing up at Hilles—as the house was called—imbued this grandson with a faith in the rustic. And it was against this setting that I had my first day's hunting when I was nine.



Top: Beaufort meet, Badminton, 1909. Queen Alexandra of Russia on the right. *Above:* The author's great-aunt, Phyllis Cantrell-Hubbersty, at a meet of the Quorn, 1930s.

My mother's family did not have the same idealistic approach because they had never left the land. The Bethells had been hunting in East Yorkshire since they obtained their estates there in 1590. They were—and are—the embodiment of English landed gentry. My eighteenth-century ancestor, William Bethell, was one of a group of well-known sporting squires. From his seat, Rise Park, he raced—and won the St. Leger—he kept fighting cocks, and he hunted. He was master of his own hounds for thirty seasons, and like a true squire he hardly went to London. My maternal grandfather, Adrian Bethell, was as keen on the sport as his forebear. Throughout most of the 1920s and '30s he was master, and kenneled the hounds at Rise and hunted them himself. He did this through the height of the Depression, when land was almost valueless and most land-

COURTESY OF SIMON BLOW

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owners' bank balances distinctly unhealthy. And my grandfather's was no exception. But where his hunting was concerned Adrian Bethell was a determined man, and nothing would daunt him. On his death an obituary notice spoke of "Adrian's excitement as he followed his hounds across that great drain country where he belonged." I owe much of my hunting blood to this grandfather, and not least an equal determination to hunt in financial circumstances that have always been far worse than his own.

Hunting is an expensive sport. It is not just the maintaining of a pack of hounds, but for the followers the buying and keeping of horses, the cost of the clothes—a good pair of boots today will be £800—the annual subscription, and innumerable other items that can fast reduce one to poverty. Why, then, do people do it? For me, beyond the sheer excitement of the sport itself, is the way that hunting can defy the passage of the centuries. Waiting at a covert side for hounds to draw and looking out to a horizon of woods and fields broken only by church spires, time stands still. Growing up in a post-war world where the past was being continually disrupted by change, I remember how this changelessness affected me. And through adulthood this charm of another age has not been lost.



The Hon. Michael Willoughby hunting in the 1930s with the Middleton.

It is as if you can reach back through time to a more tranquil moment when those contented squires, like my Bethell ancestor, had hunted their foxes by day and dined in each other's houses by night.

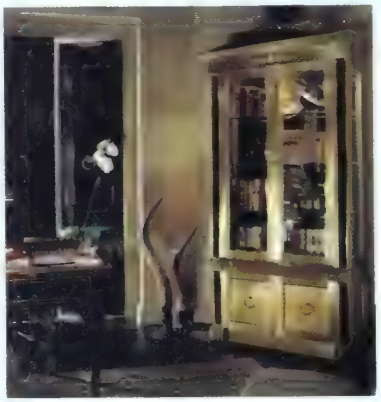
Hunting has no need of the modern world. It is grounded on that ancient, interdependent stability of squire, farmer, and country laborer that makes up the proper harmony of England's rural scene. To the millions of town dwellers who are the vast majority of England's population, it is impossible to believe that such a scene can still be there. True enough, with the spread and sprawl of cities, the slicing up of countryside by motorways, and the dwindling of landed estates through taxation, hunting has suffered its setbacks, but it remains a most resilient sport. Over two hundred packs currently flourish and with them the rural manners of an eighteenth- and nineteenth-century England. Where else do you find the swoop of the top hat to say Good Morning, or hunt servants—as the huntsman and whippers-in are called—trained in courtesy to the field as they had been two hundred years before, when hunting consisted of the squire and just a few friends?

Though fox hunting began in the seventeenth century—before then you hunted stag—it was the eighteenth-century landed gentlemen who had a strong appeal for me. There was a sense of achieved satisfaction about their lives. With their hunting and their shooting, and their houses often filled with books and objects collected from the grand tour, they seemed to have perfected a rural ideal. For not all were like Henry Fielding's cussing, ill-educated Squire Western. A prime example of the civilized squire must be Peter Beckford, cousin to William Beckford, the fantasist creator of Fonthill Abbey. Beckford owned a substantial estate in Dorset and in a book, *Thoughts on Hunting,* he wrote what remains a classic on the chase. But he was both sportsman and scholar, as his friend the novelist Laurence Sterne pointed out:

> Never had fox the honour of being chased to death by so accomplished a huntsman: never was huntsman's dinner graced by such urbanity and wit. He would bag a fox in Greek, find a hare in Latin, inspect his ken-

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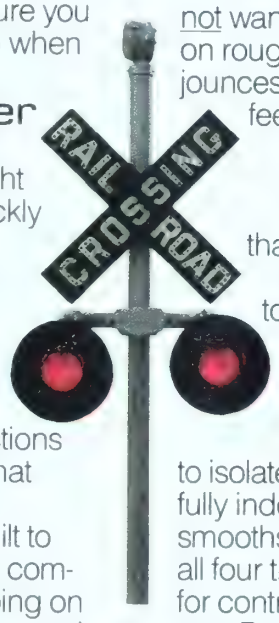
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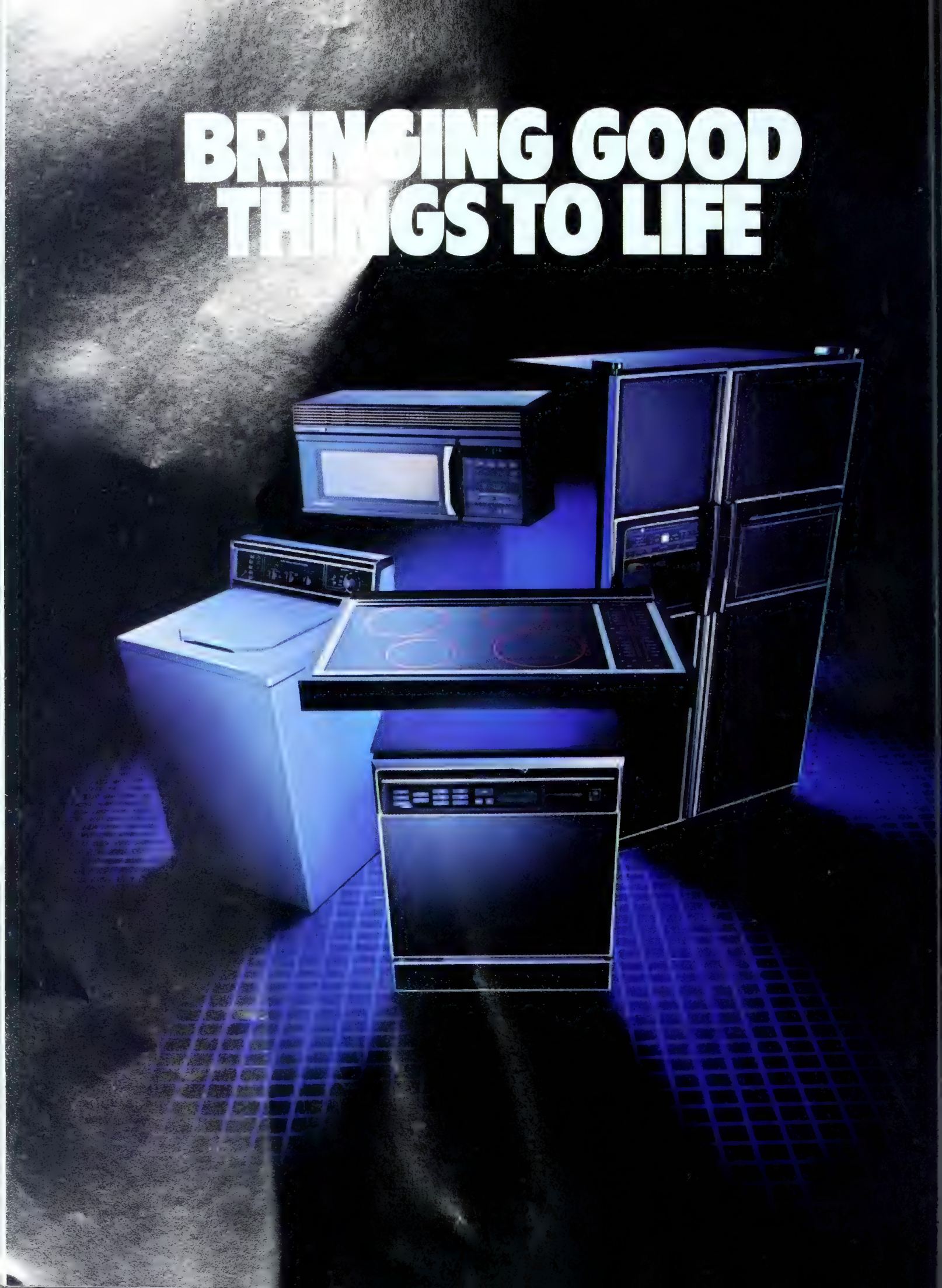
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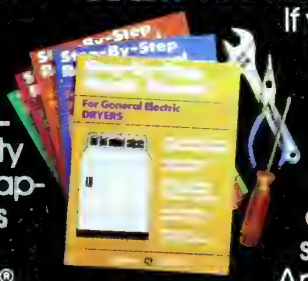
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nels in Italian, and direct the economy of his stables in exquisite French.

In the eighteenth century they did not necessarily hunt in the red or scarlet that we now associate with fox hunting. You wore whatever you wanted. Tawny or dark blue were colors frequently used, while the hunt servants always wore the family livery. The only survivors of this custom today are the Berkeley and Beaufort hunt staff, who still wear yellow and green respectively. Although the red coat had been worn in a number of hunts since the reign of King James II, it did not become a fashion until after the Napoleonic Wars. The soldiers fighting the Peninsular campaign would hunt behind the lines under the encouragement of Wellington. They even formed their own pack of hounds. The duke believed that hunting taught his men an eye for negotiating open country, so necessary in mounted warfare. The soldiers hunted in their red tunics, and when the war was victoriously over, the red coat began to be taken up by packs throughout the kingdom.

But of course it is the challenge of negotiating country that makes hunting so attractive to any determined rider. No one knows which way a fox may run, or how sharp his wits may be, and this gives hunting the constant element of surprise. And when land began to be enclosed in the early nineteenth century, and there were fences to jump, the devilry of the chase increased tenfold. Hunting became a testing ground for dash and courage. It could also be the arena for reckless high spirits. "Mad" Jack Mytton, that endearing Regency squire who was to end penniless in Calais, took things too far when he began jumping tables in his own dining room. But a fast run across good country is an exhilarating experience. The speed can be that of a steeplechase with the additional hazard of the unknown. The late Earl of Lonsdale, dubbed "the Yellow Earl" for the extravagant display of his canary livery everywhere, must still hold the record for clearing a double fence measuring a width of 27 feet, but having once spent a morning clearing forty obstacles, I can vouch for the demands on stamina!

Hunting has always yielded a gallery of "characters" who have changed little since R. S. Surtees was writing such novels as *Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour* or


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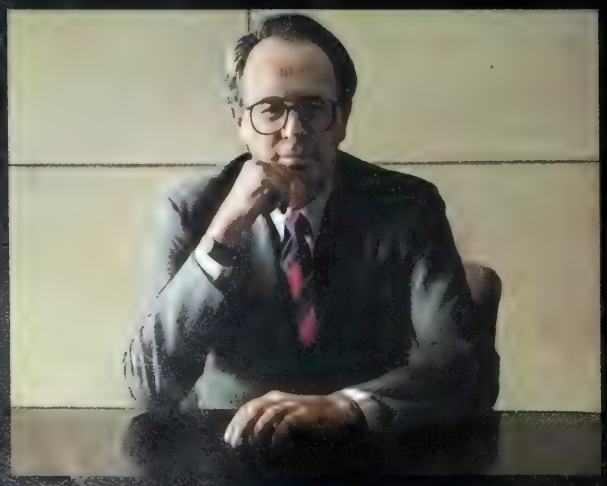
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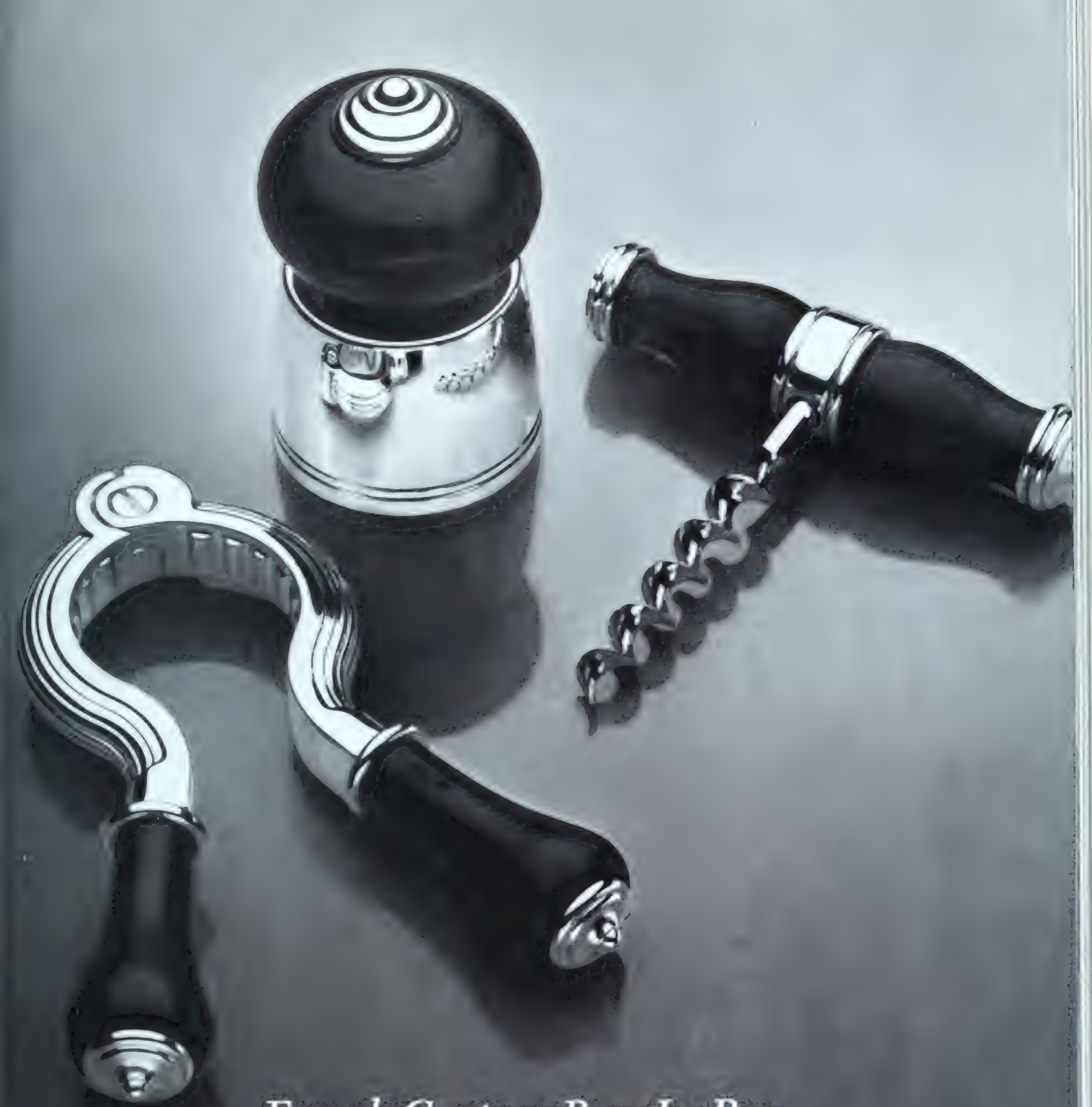
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Mr. Romford's Hounds some 130 years ago. In England hunting and hound "talk" can be a language of its own, and from early on I was enchanted by the curious shorthand phraseology. "*Nose, nose, nose,* is my motto. Legs are of no use if they only drive the nose beyond the scent," says Mr. Facey Romford, discussing hound breeding. This was precisely the pattern of talk I came to hear in dedicated hunting circles. Eccentric mannerisms that stem from a bizarre singularity of outlook which, I'm sure, is to be found nowhere else. Only the other day, I was hacking down a lane between the drawing of coverts talking to a keen hunting farmer. He was telling me of the 1930s and the great riding characters of that day. The name of a great-uncle of mine came up. Philip Cantrell-Hubbersty was considered one of the boldest riders in Leicestershire, which is England's prime hunting country. Thinking of Uncle Philip and his fearlessness, the farmer suddenly stopped in his tracks and gazed across the landscape as if he had seen a vision. He then produced this remarkable metaphor, "In the darkest jungles of Africa the name Cantrell-Hubbersty would bring light."

Of England's recognized country-house sports—hunting, shooting, and fishing—hunting is the only one which involves the whole community. It is the



Miss Monica Sheriffe, avid Meltonian sportswoman and partygoer who only spent one evening a fortnight at home.



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The Duke of Beaufort's in Gloucestershire can have more than 250 out on a Saturday, while the smart Midlands packs have to keep their numbers restricted

only one which is not a private affair. You hunt over other people's land by permission, and provided you have the cash to pay your way, anyone is free to participate. A meet of the hounds is as much a social event embracing all levels of society as it is a tough, sporting activity. Hunting is one of the main supports of the county structure. In the depressed 1930s, for example, when agriculture was at an abysmal low, to know that this sport was still there brought great unity to flagging spirits. For these reasons a master of hounds holds a position which is slightly apart from anyone else in the county. Traditionally drawn from the landowning class, he is looked upon to exercise a patriarchal influence, dispensing dependability and goodwill. The character of a landed gentleman could usually be relied upon to contain these ingredients. Though the Yellow Earl was declined a mastership when he first applied, on the grounds that he was too flash.

But many things have changed in English hunting today. There are not the number of large landed estates providing the ready supply of masters that there were fifty years ago. Today a master may be in industry, or he may be a farmer. With the fashion for sowing winter corn, many fields are put out of access. Much of England's rolling grassland—so excellent for a fast hunt—is now under plow. And English hunting has for years been pestered by an anti–blood sports lobby. But by reverse, more people are hunting today than ever. The Duke of Beaufort's in Gloucestershire can have more than 250 out on a Saturday, while the smart Midlands packs, like the Quorn and the Belvoir, have to keep numbers severely restricted. Of course there are those who hunt simply for social reasons and, like Surtees's rich vulgarian Mr. Joseph Large, might wish it could be done by deputy. Hunting, after all, is the perfect way to rub shoulders with the landed. Equally there are scores who clearly feel the sport strongly in their blood. But variety of person has long contributed to the English hunting field's colorful panorama. Indeed, as a living piece of history that has kept glamour, color, and pace, the English fox hunt is without parallel. □

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A PUNGENT CELEBRATION

At the Gilroy Garlic Festival too much garlic is never enough

By Alexander Cockburn

Tribal memory, often frail, has little difficulty in evoking the origins of the Gilroy Garlic Festival, even as they slip into the dark backward of time. In the spring of 1979, Rudy Melone, head of the local college, was hosting a Rotary lunch. The keynote of this luncheon was garlic, which is scarcely surprising since Gilroy, California, has an association with garlic every bit as ecstatic as that of Castroville (a little farther west toward Monterey Bay) with artichokes. Among the guests was Betsy Balsley, food editor of the *Los Angeles Times,* and in due course she fortified Melone in his suggestion, pregnant with greatness for Gilroy, that what the place needed was a garlic festival with all the trimmings. In fact, the politics of garlic festivals in Northern California are somewhat fraught. Tribal memory cites a start to the garlic boom in 1974 with Lloyd John Harris's *The Book of Garlic.* In 1976, with Harris's help, Alice Waters, owner of the Berkeley restaurant Chez Panisse, threw the first fifteen-course all-garlic dinner. In 1979 Gilroy entered the lists. Each year garlic is also honored by Waters's forces on Berkeley turf, but relations between Berkeley and Gilroy do not appear to have the conviviality of the festivals they both sponsor.





Above: Déjeuner sur l'ail at Gilroy: the author's lunch, stuffed mushrooms and a fiery pepper-steak sandwich on garlic bread. *Below:* cooking up the traditional delicacies of the festival in Gourmet Alley.

Not slow to heed Ms. Balsley's call were prominent locals including Melone, a garlic czar called Don Christopher, and Val Filice, impresario of many a feast in the region and now part owner of Señor Froggy's who tends to start his recipes with the words, "Now, if you're only cooking for five hundred . . ." The summer of that same year aromas of Gilroy's first garlic festival wafted up Highway 101 toward San Jose. For three days the mind-expanding, body-nourishing, soul-restoring properties of garlic were celebrated, as they have been every year since, by natural acts of mastication, with music and beer on the side. So who cares if anthropologists might snoot the Gilroy Garlic Festival as being a little *nouveau*? Life doesn't begin and end with *The Golden Bough.*

The thing any enthusiast of food festivals has to watch out for is monotony. Take Castroville, which launched its first artichoke festival twenty years before Gilroy took Ms. Balsley's advice. How many ways can you cut an artichoke? There's cream of artichoke soup, artichoke frittata, and of course the apogee of Castroville's September festival, in the form of french-fried artichokes. Then what? Same problem with the asparagus festival they have in Michigan each June. There are only a limited number of ways any sane person cares to eat asparagus. Beyond them you get into the credibility problems associated with oriental love-making manuals.

Gilroy, wisely, in my view, has chosen to honor garlic and in all possible ways extol its sublime virtues, but yet ensure that those for whom garlic is an interest but not a passion will have a good time.

Just over 140,000 people attended the Gilroy Garlic Festival in late July 1986, and to one visitor it was immediately apparent that the organizers, sustained by three thousand voluntary laborers over six months of planning,

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know what they are at. When Walt Disney sat down to plan Disney World, the first lineaments of his dream took the form of lavatories and parking lots. Someone in Gilroy had the same sound judgment about basic necessities of the human condition and if it's true that only in America do they truly care about where to park and where to pee, only in America will you find the following key elements of the national culture, with special emphasis on garlic:

Garlic wreaths, a cornhusk garlic lily; hot garlic pastrami, garlic popcorn; logo T-shirts; garlic jelly, potato skins, garlic bagels; cloisonné garlics; trivets, key caddies, recipe boxes, cutting boards, mug boards; belt buckles, key chains, raffia garlic items; buffalo jerky, deer-elk, mountain-man items; Tom Clark figurines featuring Gilroy and other gnomelike items; beveled-glass pictures with pressed flowers, garlic recipes on glass; fudge, brittle, caramel apples, garlic chocolate; Garlique essence for women; ruffled tank tops; garlic magnet pins; garlic-oriented bumper stickers and license plates; garlic ice cream.

But if this gives you the idea that Gilroy was putting on a West Coast equivalent of commercial activities in the arcades of Boston's harborfront, minus the potpourri, scented soap, and candles, do not be misled. At the first level, the Gilroy festival had many of the attributes of a 1960s music festival. There were four stages carrying musical groups, which changed every hour—toting up to about seventy different bands over three days, ranging from bluegrass to folk rock to old-time rock 'n' roll.

Against this acoustic background, people went about their business, which was picnicking on the grass, lining up at the food booths, and then picnicking all over again. "I'm a machinist by day and a gourmet vegetarian cook by night," a voice said behind me, and I turned to introduce myself to Les Olive, formerly of Albuquerque, New Mexico, now of the Napa Valley, whose pleasure it is to fabricate metal jewelry from seven thirty in the morning until three thirty in the afternoon, take an hour's break, and then head for the restaurant kitchen, where he works another six hours. We were both watching the dying moments of the Great Garlic Cook-Off, which had begun months earlier when no less than fourteen thousand entrants (no professionals admitted) had submitted their recipes, which had to contain no less than three cloves of garlic. Evelyn Bautista and her team of helpers then winnowed these down to twelve hundred and sent them off to a professional consultant in San Francisco to refine further to only eight finalists. "Why send them to San Francisco?" I had asked Evelyn. "This is a small town," she said delicately.

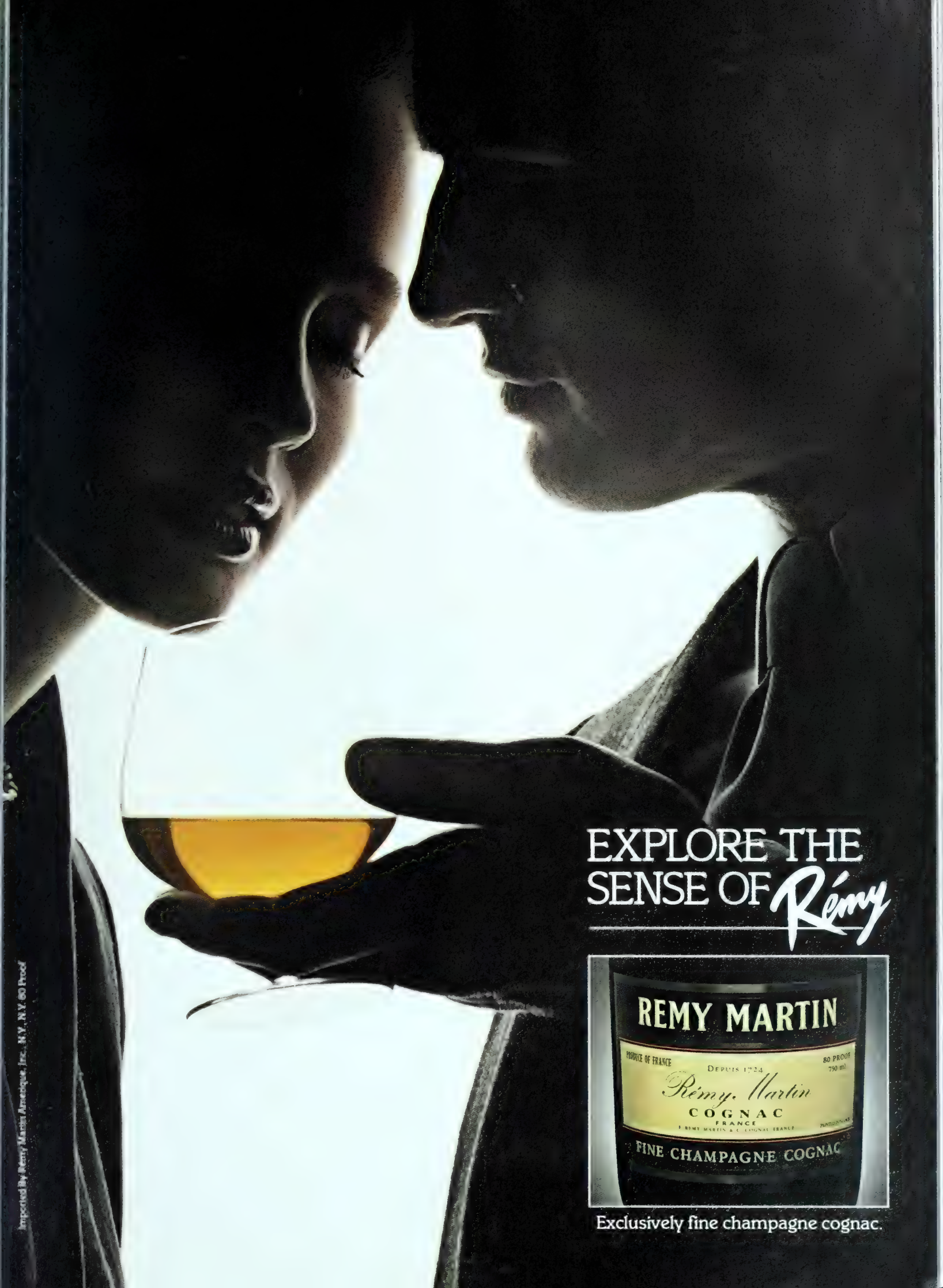




Above: Crowds mingling under outsized papier-mâché garlic bestiary. *Below:* Billboard fare at one of the festival booths.

As it turned out, there was one local woman in the final eight. But Patty Filice's cream of roasted garlic soup did not prevail. Nor did the entry titled Susie Townsend's Ex-husband's Sesame Broccoli Pasta Salad Significantly Improved. This, I need hardly say, was a competitor from New York. Ms. Townsend is a senior vice-president at the advertising firm of Foote, Cone & Belding. "Why did it need improving?" I asked. "It was dull and bland," said the ex-wife of the ex-husband coolly.

It had been a bad start to the day for Bob Salyer, the winner of the Great Garlic Cook-Off. Bob, bearded and sufficiently ample to crack the stage when he made his victory leap, had been an hour out of Monterey on the way to Gilroy that morning when he realized he'd left his ravioli cutter behind. But even a breathless and late arrival had not disturbed the composure of this amateur chef. His handmade garlic and ricotta ravioli with garlic béchamel sauce and shrimp took two


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hours to make beneath the angled mirrors that were Evelyn Bautista's pride and joy. The judges made their verdict. Bob jumped and the stage shuddered. Later, amid his exultation, he explained that he'd been out of work since his last job, working for a disposal company in Pebble Beach, and this victory would help in developing a business selling his raviolis to restaurants and gourmet stores in the Monterey area.

Sadly, it turned out that Miss Garlic had been chosen a month earlier, when Franca Barsi had carried off the prize for superiority in personality, evening gown, fashion modeling, talent presentation, and a short speech on garlic. Having missed Ms. Barsi's allocution, I sought out Don Christopher to describe the braided destinies of garlic and the town of Gilroy. Mr. Christopher, a trim and energetic advertisement for the healthful properties of the plant from which he has made his living, grows, packs, and ships about twenty percent of the sixty million pounds of fresh garlic that goes to market in the United States. The rest, about 140 million pounds, is dehydrated, used as flavoring, and even sold in those repellent little containers, which Mr. Christopher hopes to displace with the jars of fresh five-minute-cooked chopped garlic that are his present preoccupation.

Facts jumped nimbly from his mouth. Ninety percent of the garlic consumed in the United States is grown in California, some of it near Gilroy or adjacent areas, but the bulk on the other side of the coastal range in the San Joaquin Valley. According to Mr. Christopher, Gilroy entered garlic's history books when a bunch of Chinese farmers started growing it there some sixty years ago. It did well and soon both they and the Italians were growing and shipping it commercially. Mechanization makes it possible to plant in a day what it once took a whole season to achieve.

Harvesting is the most laborious part. The seasonal workers have to pull each plant out of the ground by hand, for machines would bruise it. Then the plant lies out to dry for a couple of weeks. Next the field-workers clip each root and stem and bring the heads into the packing house, where the outer skins are peeled off. This is necessary only from an aesthetic point of view. Americans like their garlic white and regard a bulb in its natural hue, somewhat brownish in color, with suspicion. And as for quality? The bigger the garlic head the better, said Mr. Christopher, brandishing a fistful of supercolossals.

Freighted with the history and present dignity of garlic, I yet had one duty. As a conscientious investigative reporter for House & Garden, I lined up in front of the booth dispensing garlic ice cream. To my enormous relief, it ran out just as I reached the counter. The ice-cream dispenser seemed genuinely sorry, as though fate had cruelly denied me a great treat. Happily I strolled along Gourmet Alley, an institution since 1979. Here a team of volunteer chefs, beneath the overall supervision of Val Filice, produce the traditional delicacies of the Gilroy Garlic Festival: stir-fry vegetables, stuffed mushrooms, pasta con pesto, calamari, scampi, garlic bread, and, it goes without saying, the pepper-steak sandwiches which in truth are the glory of the whole proceedings.

From behind a chain-link barrier awed festival-goers would stand by the hour watching Mr. Filice and culinary names great in Gilroy such as Lou Trinchero, Paul Pelliccione, and Jim Rubino supervise the production of prodigious masses of food in culinary vessels from the kitchens of Gargantua: yard-wide pans from which, every few minutes, there would swell the rolling "flame-up" awaited by the crowd as the calamari met the hot oil of the stir-fry. Barbecues the size of subway grilles bore their burden of top sirloin. Mushrooms by the thousand sizzled briefly for their browning.

Everything looked good, smelled good, and, when the moment of truth came, tasted good, too. The mushrooms were tender, not overly freighted with their parsley, garlic, chopped stalk, and bread-crumb center. Best was the pepper-steak sandwich in the style of Santa Maria, well-seasoned meat with red bell pepper and onion in a crisp straitjacket of garlic bread. Even investigative reporters know moments of innocent happiness and this was one of them. As the nursery rhyme said about the rabbit raiding the wall garden: "They found him at last/at his shameful repast./He'd had to lie

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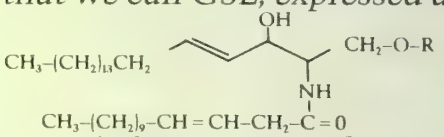
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crown/but was still eating fast."

Later Mr. Filice, who first began cooking at the age of seven when he would go about the kitchens of Gilroy preparing spaghetti sauce for the field-workers' evening meals, sketched in the background to Gourmet Alley's annual feats. In 1986 the scampi, 2,500 pounds of it, had been ordered six months ahead from the Philippines, joining in Gilroy another thousand pounds from Bangladesh. And 12,500 pounds of top sirloin had been trucked in. He began to go into number glaze, and I broke in. "How do I make pepper steak in the manner of Santa Maria, Mr. Filice?" The day before, there had been coy twinkling about this from some other Gilroy chefs, with roguish reference to the "Santa Maria secret."

"There's no mystery about it," said Mr. Filice. "Barbecue your meat, not too far from the flame, for fifteen minutes or so, turning it frequently to seal in the juices. Then, when it's good and browned—remember I'm talking about large pieces here—put it into a stainless-steel pan with minced garlic, oregano, basil, red pepper, pepper, salt, a glass of beer, and a glass of wine and let it steam for half an hour under a tight lid. Meanwhile toast your garlic bread, then brush it with your mixture of garlic, oil, butter, and spices, basting the meat with some of this garlic-bread mixture every five minutes or so. Sauté your red bell peppers with yellow onions, combine everything, and . . ."

Mr. Filice made a gesture of satisfied repletion. He had every right to be proud. By eight on Sunday evening the park grounds were cleared, the trash already picked up by teams of volunteers, revelers homeward bound having spent enough to yield some $250,000 for the charities supported by the Gilroy Garlic Festival. "It grows by ten percent every year," Mr. Filice added. I could see that he was dreaming of a barbecue for one million people. I hope not, but we should not be worried if his dream comes true. The people of Gilroy have everything under control. □

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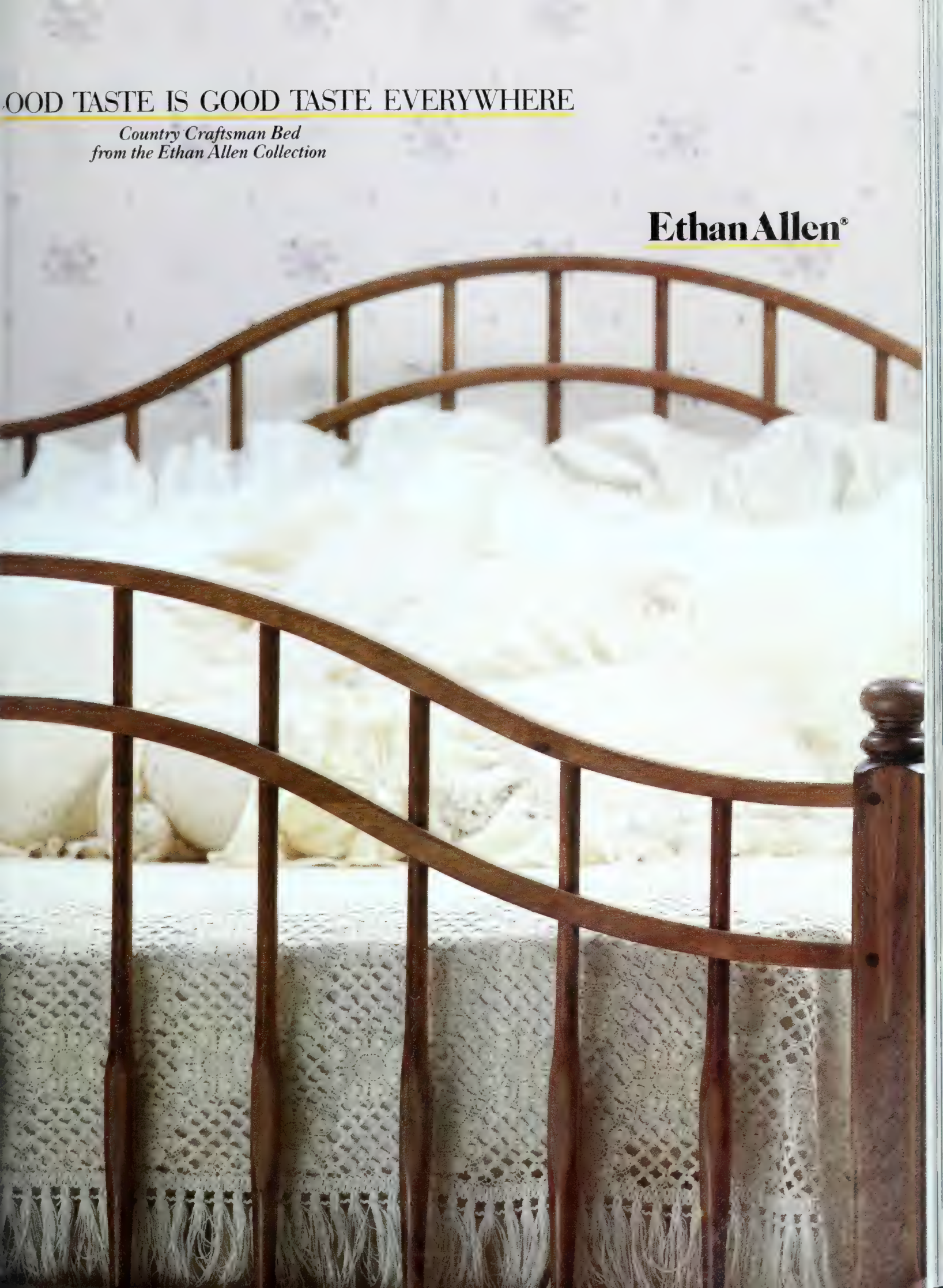


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JOURNAL

On the arts scene



Louise Bourgeois



Richard Serra



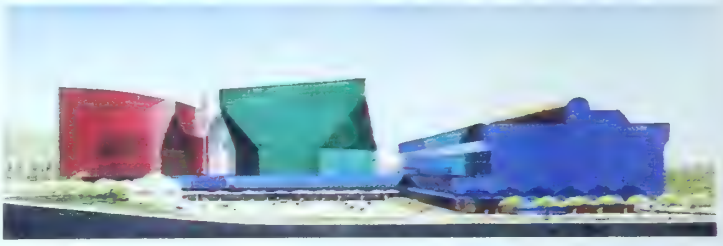
Nancy Graves



Jedd Garet

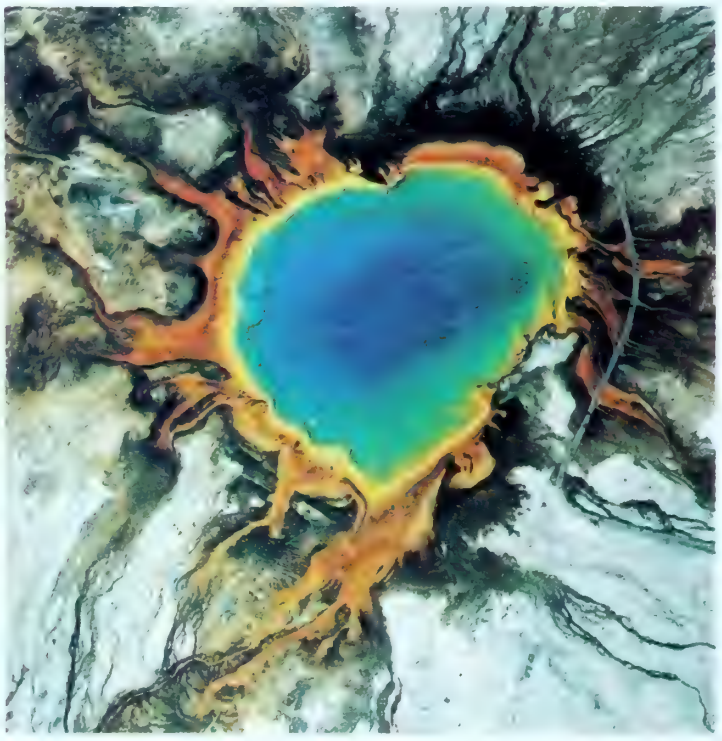
FACE VALUES

A portrait of the artist as a success: Richard Marshall, a curator at the Whitney Museum, has gathered a lively selection of hotshot headshots, *left,* taken by Robert Mapplethorpe, in *50 New York Artists* (Chronicle Books, $35). Examples of their work and individual statements accompany the photographs. Although only a dozen of the artists were born in New York, all have found the Big Apple to be inspiration for the fruit of their labors. *David Lisi*



RED WHALE, GREEN WHALE

L.A.'s Pacific Design Center—more familiarly known as the Blue Whale—will soon have company: a $150 million addition by Cesar Pelli, who designed the 1976 structure, one of the few distinguished modern landmarks amid the urban sprawl. The new wing, *above,* continues his scheme of boldly colored glass skins stretched over startling forms but echoes, not apes, the original.



TAKING THE LONG VIEW

Swiss photographer Georg Gerstler takes the *very* high road in his book *Below from Above* (Abbeville, $35), a collection of 133 full-color aerial photographs with commentary by the author on subjects drawn from five continents and a hundred nations. Equipped with a handheld Nikon, Gerstler leans from his Cessna aircraft into the slipstream to record such images as the port of Kali Baru near Jakarta, basketball courts in Santa Barbara, or the Grand Prismatic Hot Spring, *left,* in Yellowstone. His photographs impart an abstract beauty to the proportions of our lives while they reveal the mysterious orders and patterns of a world dwarfed by our imaginations. *D.L.*



Punchinellos with Dancing Dogs

PUNCH LINES

Among the most inspired renderings of the Italian commedia dell'arte is the suite of 104 Punchinello drawings produced by Domenico Tiepolo, son of the great fresco artist. Dispersed throughout the world in the 1920s, the suite has just been reunited for publication as *Domenico Tiepolo: The Punchinello Drawings* (George Braziller, $80): as Adelheid Gealt writes, an "epic of vignettes." *Margaret Morse*



RING MASTER

Wagner, *in four parts, "Great Performances" on PBS beginning Oct. 24*

Richard Wagner as played by Richard Burton, *left,* will elicit the same response as his music: love or hate. The series is overnarrated, but its settings, cinematography, and cast—Vanessa Redgrave as Cosima, and Olivier, Richardson, and Gielgud—makes it worth watching. *Gabrielle Winkel*

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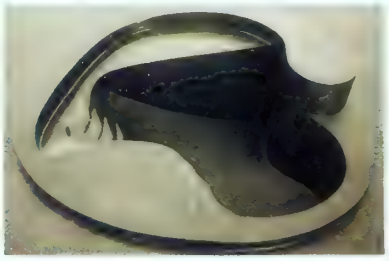
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Above: U.S. pavilion with Isamu Noguchi's *Slide Mantra,* 1986. *Left:* Noguchi's model for Josef von Sternberg swimmimg pool, 1935. *Top left* and *far left:* Entrance and interiors of French pavilion by Daniel Buren. *Below:* Details of J.-F. Octave's *120 Friends,* Belgian pavilion. *Bottom right: The Banquet* by Melvin Charney, Canada.



VENETIAN BLAND

Once the foremost international art event, the Venice Biennale in recent years has been eclipsed by avant-garde extravaganzas like Documenta in Kassel, West Germany. This year's edition of the Biennale, the 42nd since 1895, did nothing to recapture its former stature. The official entries from 39 countries were largely disappointing, perhaps none more so than the U.S. tribute to Isamu Noguchi, curated by Henry Geldzahler. Neither the small selection of works nor the surprisingly drab installation by Arata Isozaki did justice to the sculptor. The award for best entry went to the French pavilion by Daniel Buren, whose chic series of Op-striped, Minimalist rooms invited unfortunate comparison to neo-Directoire décor of the sixties. Best-artist honors were shared by England's Frank Auerbach (he of the heavily impastoed portraits) and Sigmar Polke of West Germany, whose huge, ravishingly painted abstract murals were a high point of the show. For the most part, though, the quality was exceedingly low. One sleeper among the somnolent proceedings was the Belgian pavilion. Its central chamber was ringed with J.-F. Octave's panoramic *120 Friends,* another gallery hung with François Schuiten's Futurist-inspired comic strip *Dark Cities.* It had a kind of East Village verve, which momentarily bestirred the grande dame of Venice. *Martin Filler*



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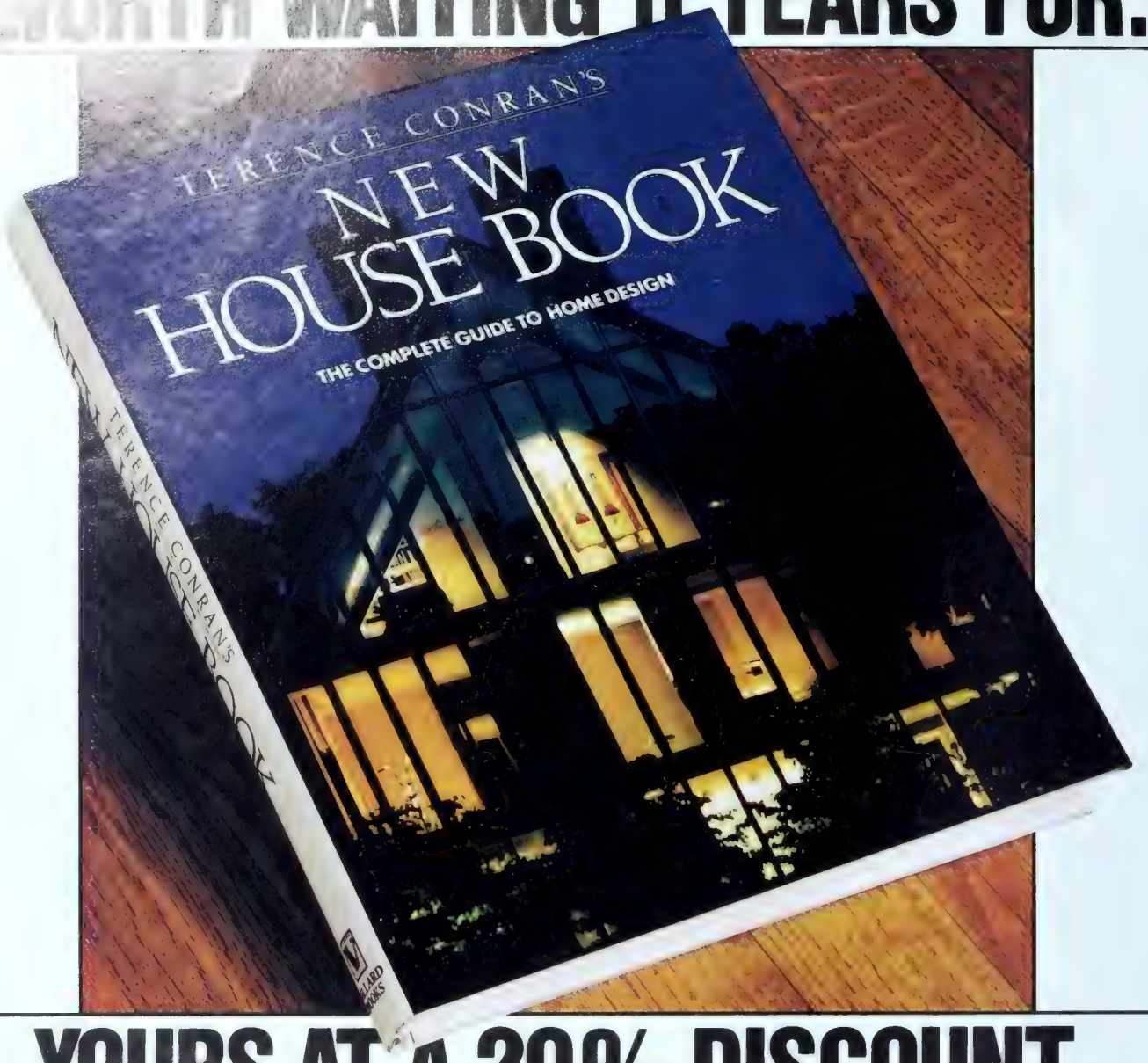


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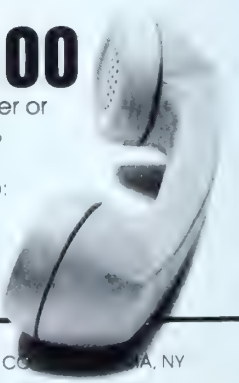
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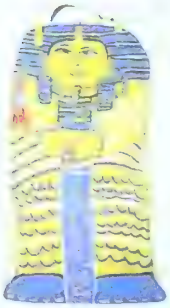
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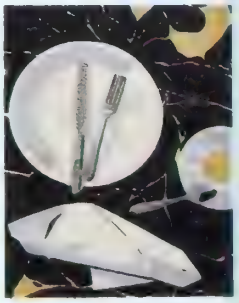
By Donovan Webster



Back in the mid seventies, when "art" was something that hung on museum walls and New York's East Village was just another rough neighborhood, the Fabric Workshop in Philadelphia was teaching established artists to make usable art. The workshop ideal was a simple one, to teach artists the technique of silk-screening fabric by hand and then to allow the artists to make something with their newfound skill. The workshop's only house rule: that the created object be as useful as it is artistically endowed.

When you know this, the "new" East Village notion that everything must be imparted with some decorative design doesn't seem so new. Roy Lichtenstein was at the workshop making shirts with his distinctive strokes of color and Benday dots when most East Village artists still lived in the suburbs with their parents. Red Grooms and Lysiane Luong made a garment bag silk-screened like a technicolor sarcophagus that stands shoulder-to-shoulder with anything in the shops along Avenue A. And sculptor Robert Morris designed a set of antinuclear bedsheets at the workshop he called "Restless Sleepers/ Atomic Shroud, 1981." Images of mushroom clouds float on the top sheet, and silk-screened skeletons of nuked sleepers line the bottom. Though not something most people would like to dream between, Morris's sheets bring a 41-year-old nightmare even closer to home.





Far left: Garment bag by Red Grooms and Lysiane Luong. *Left:* "Linoleum" by Tony Costanza and "sandals" by Wade Saunders. *Above:* "Tablecloth" by John Moore.

The workshop was started in 1976, when a group of Philadelphia artists and teachers discovered that other artists would gladly put their ideas on fabric—if only they knew how. Encouraged by this finding, and by some state and national grants, the workshop opened its doors later that year to a preselected group of 22 artists. Gaining access to the workshop these days isn't so simple. Last year more than eight hundred artists applied for the twelve to fifteen personalized workshop residencies, and the workshop also invites other "name" artists to apply.

One part art class and one part government-funded artists program, the Fabric Workshop is also a well-respected handmade crafts studio. Some of its fabrics were included in the Whitney Museum's "High Styles" exhibit, and three solo shows of workshop creations have already run this year. Pieces are included in the "Workshop Experiments" show at the Museum of Arts, Science, and Industry in Bridgeport, Connecticut, starting November 6 and at Rochester Institute of Technology starting January 31, 1987. The workshop also maintains commercial dealings. A store on the premises and a catalogue sell limited-edition workshop creations, and decorator's samples of workshop fabrics are available. □

The 61-page color catalogue is available for $8.50 by mail from Kippie Stroud Swingle, The Fabric Workshop, 1133 Arch, 5th floor, Philadelphia, Pa. 19107.



In the Fabric Workshop loft in Philadelphia, shades made of sample fabrics filter the afternoon light slanting across the fabric-printing tables.

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CHAIR: George II Irish carved mahogany wingchair, circa 1750.

CARD-TABLE: William and Mary japanned fold-over card-table, circa 1690.

PAINTING: Oil on canvas depicting rabbits in a landscape (signed indistinctly and dated 1844).





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ROCOCO RUSTIC

Dan Mack's sophisticated twig furniture is handcrafted in Harlem

By William Bryant Logan

Everyone loves a walk in the woods, but where most of us see the shifting, dappled shade and woven trunks and branches of maple, alder, cedar, and beech, Dan Mack sees chair legs, bedposts, headboards, and backs for love seats. Tramping up a slope in a thick clump of second-growth maples just west of the Hudson River, not 45 minutes from Manhattan, he keeps his eyes to the ground, diving from sapling to sapling to examine their bases. "Hillsides are wonderful for legs," he exults. "Sometimes you'll find a real cabriole."

Dan Mack makes puns that you can sit on or lie in. His furniture has all the structural elements of the ordinary movables of domestic architecture, but except for the woven-cloth seat or the innerspring mattress, it is made of unworked wood, often with the bark left intact, scarred by deer's teeth or buckshot or calloused where a branch has broken off. Dozens of craftsmen and even a factory or two make such rustic furniture, using traditional Adirondack, bunkhouse, or bentwood patterns. Mack himself has what he calls a "production line" of weighty cedar-post beds and garden seats. The work dearest to his heart, however, is something else entirely.

Mack's twig furniture is virtually ideogrammatic, skating the line between sculpture and furniture. The backs and legs have the suggestive, weightless feel of Chinese calligraphy, playing the asymmetry of found wood against the symmetry of artfully arranged curves, forks, and leaf nodes. As insubstantial as they look, the "twigs" are really the trunks and branches of 25-year-old hardwood saplings, and the furniture is pegged



WILLIAM WALDRON

Two Mack twig chairs flank a Frank Lloyd Wright–inspired dining chair of hand-split oak



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Florian Papp



In his Harlem studio Dan Mack clamps tenon to mortise for a set of peeled maple dressing-room stools. A ladder with posts made from a single forked hickory trunk leans at top right.

together with sturdy, inch-deep mortise-and-tenon joints, secured with strong glue and finishing nails.

When he began six years ago, Mack's idea was to scale down the massive rustic furniture that had adorned the huge "camps" built for the Gilded Age rich in the Adirondack Mountains between the end of the Civil War and the beginning of the Great Depression. The traditional style looks rural, but even then it was not. Before the influx of summer people to rugged retreats like the Adirondacks and the Springs in Virginia's Appalachians, the rural folk were doing their vernacular best to imitate the cultured styles of a century before. Then came the tourists in search of the "primitive, a complete escape from everyday living," and country people found a ready market for strange furniture based on unpeeled branches, the stuff of a child's fantasy fort.

The furniture of the Great Camps calls up the fertile American contradiction between the worker and the yeoman. Then as now, however, it was a matter that could be taken too earnestly. Much of the Adirondack rustic furniture (and its recent imitations) has a medicinal feel to it, like a soyburger that one is to take seriously both for what it is and what it is not. Mack's unusual, dancing chairs, beds, ladders, sofas, and garden seats are endowed with a frankly urban sense of humor. They are challenging, so much so that at a recent museum show one onlooker praised their use of negative space, while the next deadpanned, "Oh yes, my son made some of these at Boy Scout camp." Though Mack has learned the value of native materials from the Adirondack style, his formal imagination is as close to Memphis as it is to the camps.

It is closest of all to the English Rococo of the 1750s, the period that produced Edmund Burke's definition of the sublime as "capable of producing delight; not pleasure, but a sort of delightful horror." In pursuit of this sensation, landowners built elaborate, grotesque garden grottoes and hermitages, a few of them actually peopled by hired hermits. It was here, under the combined influence of Chinese and Gothic tastes, that the modern world got its first rustic furniture. Seats were made out of masses of weirdly twisted roots, or they might look perfectly Neoclassic but for the odd twigs and branches sticking out of them every which way.

Like these, Mack's furniture is theatrical and social. Instead of making a statement, it suggests a relationship. Casting around for a metaphor to describe what he does, he says, "I want to be a propmaster in people's lives . . . a *twigmeister*." His most satisfying commissions involve staging. When a woman requested a rocker in Mack's lightest twig style, her husband squirmed in the seat, complaining that it was uncomfortable. "I don't care," the wife answered. "I want our friends to visit, sit on the Italian couch, and admire me sitting in this rocker."

Given his background, it is not surprising that Mack should look at himself as a scenarist. Matthew Darly, one of the more celebrated English makers of Rococo pattern books, had been one of the fine political cartoonists of his day; Mack came to furniture making out of a career in radio and television journalism. During the 1970s he had worked for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, run a controversial interview program on New York City's WRVR, and gone on to produce documentaries for the *Today* show. "I loved journalism," he recalls. "It was a license to find out all about people's lives." As *twigmeister,* his pleasure in creating a piece is much the same, though now the end product is worked



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out between himself and the clients alone.

To the surprise even of his fellow furniture makers, he went through no arduous apprenticeship before setting up shop. "I just parachuted in," he says. He had bought his first daughter a twig chair in a Catskills antiques shop and copied the design himself. He next made several more children's chairs and, too sheepish to admit his authorship, offered them to a New York dealer as "made by a Little Old Man in the Catskills." The buyer wanted to know if the guy could make chairs for adults. "I'll ask him," said Mack, swallowing hard. In his role as the LOM, it took two months to make the first chair.

Though he entertained the idea of relocating with his family to the Catskills, his parachute brought him down across 125th Street in Manhattan to a studio on the edge of Harlem. Six years later, the neighborhood has grown used to the tall white guy walking across the street with half a forest in his arms. Most of his apprentices to date have been drawn from the same neighborhood. "I tried using carpenters," he says, "but they finish things much too fine, and I lose the whole feel of the piece."

The helpers brought urban street-smarts to a meticulous craftsman who was having to learn furniture making from the ground up. When he began, Mack had used penknives or hatchets to carve the inch-deep mortise-and-tenon joints that make his furniture sturdy. His discovery of the hollow auger—an antique hand tool meant specifically for cutting tenons—made the work cleaner and more efficient, as did the drill press he now uses for mortises. Still, when he was asked to design his first twig bed, in early 1984, he was paralyzed with terror.

In theory it was a great commission. The wife wanted the wildest bed imaginable, the husband wanted something rustic but conservative. Mack found the solution in a creek bed. It was a whole log with roots attached to one side, snaking like nightmare fingers just far enough that, were it to become a bedpost with the roots at the apex, the fingers would reach from the wife's side of the bed precisely to the middle. Mack and his brother succeeded in dragging the log from the creek, but he still wasn't sure he could engineer a working bed. "I was ready to call a Japanese woodworker in from Tokyo," he remembers, "but the thing I learned from a guy I lost to crack was a machinelike, forward-moving attitude. 'Hey, we can do it, we can fix it,' he kept telling me." Together they succeeded in making a functional bed out of materials that looked as substantial as a dream.

In effect, every piece Mack makes is a commission, because he will not guarantee exactly what the furniture will look like, only that it will be to the correct proportions. The final form depends on the wood he finds and on the client's wants. When David Whitney



Twig chairs await finishing touches. The seats are woven with Shaker-style cotton webbing

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asked him for a pair of chairs for outdoors, Mack found the two results looked very different, one staid, the other wild. "That's fine," Whitney reassured him. "I love it. It's like my personality. It has two sides."

Clients' suggestions have helped him extend his own style. A magazine editor asked for a bed with a headboard as light as the backs of his chairs; a tall family asked for a dining-room set with higher-than-normal chair backs. Both led him to discoveries that he has since carried on in other pieces. The oddest request to date was from a Riverdale woman who wanted a set of country ladderback chairs. When he pointed out that she could as well buy the chairs at Conran's cheaper than he could make them, she pointed to oak trees on her property that were about to be cut down. Mack asked the tree surgeon to cut them into six-foot bolts, then set to work splitting the bolts, creating a set of what he calls "Frank Lloyd Wright chairs" in wavy, hand-split oak. "I like the idea of creating heirloom furniture," he concludes, "pieces that come from a tree on someone's property, pieces they can always take with them when they've moved away."

Mack is most the *twigmeister* when he designs more than one piece for the same client. An astonishing set of outdoor furniture done for a Macy's vice-president—to get the wood for which he waited out high tide on the Connecticut shore—led to a commission to design a rustic bridge at the same man's country estate. For a family in Onteora Park in upstate New York, he has made everything from children's furniture to interior balustrades and lofts. For the furniture itself he is experimenting with mixed materials, adding worked copper tabletops to twig bases and painting pieces in black lacquer. "I recently discovered what must be the last iron forge left in New York," he says breathlessly. "Unfortunately the guy who runs it had a heart attack, but he expects to be back in a couple of weeks. I can't wait." Will he cast twig furniture in iron? "When my wife heard about it," he laughs, "she said, 'Oh great, Dan. Just what you need. Another twenty-first-century skill!' " □

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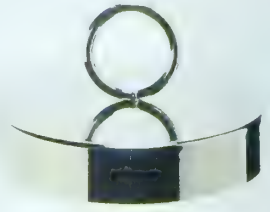
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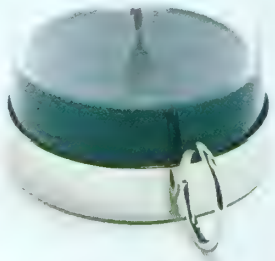


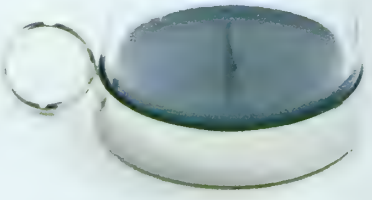


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WAKING UP THE BEDS

Rockefeller Center's fifty-year-old Channel Gardens are in the news again

By Susan S. H. Littlefield

Foxgloves and crown imperials on Fifth Avenue are an unexpected sight, even at Rockefeller Center. Masses of bulbs or brightly colored annuals are the more familiar and stalwart flowers that tend to mark the axis to the Prometheus statue in the Lower Plaza. Recently the promenade beds have contained rich assortments of more extraordinary plants, reflecting the Center's effort to expand the horticultural horizons of one of New York's most prominent outdoor gardens.



Surprisingly the Rockefeller Center site has a distinguished horticultural history. This country's first botanical garden burgeoned here briefly, in the early 1800s, under the direction of Dr. David Hosack—a Columbia University professor who was involved in the search for new medicines. His garden served as a nursery, a laboratory, and a park for city-weary New Yorkers, but it was divided into lots and sold shortly after his death.

Nearly a century later part of the site was targeted to house the Metropolitan Opera. John D. Rockefeller Jr. joined a group of his midtown neighbors in an effort to provide a monumental square in front of the new opera house. Funding failed with the crash in 1929, but Rockefeller was committed—he had little choice but to stick with the site. In the midst of a disastrous economy he resolved to develop the land commercially.

Amenities were essential to the success of Rockefeller's project, given a glut of empty midtown offices. He retained the opera's central square with its shop-lined approach from Fifth Avenue, presenting it as an amenity, quite naturally. In fact, the open space was essential, for only a dramatic central axis would weave the middle of the site into the vital fabric of midtown. Armed with his impressive scheme, Rockefeller went overseas in search of tenants. His success is evident in the buildings devoted to French and British commerce that define the promenade, giving the flower-lined watercourse that threads between Saks Fifth Avenue and Prometheus the distinction of being called the Channel Gardens.





Top: In August 1984, topiary animals appeared with grasses and Transvaal daisies to suggest Africa. The animals returned this summer to a jungle of palms and water lilies. *Above:* June herbal knot garden with standard fuchsias. *Below:* Foxgloves, forget-me-nots, crown imperials, and birches mimicking a spring woodland.

In spite of their prime location, these beds seem to have been a minor feature in the Center's plans. Raymond Hood, the Beaux-Arts architect who served as consultant to Rockefeller's designers, liked gardens. He liked Le Corbusier's idea of towers set in greenswards; he liked grand public spaces; and perhaps most importantly he knew how to handle Rockefeller's project managers. He veiled his proposal for rooftop gardens in financial terms by suggesting that garden views would generate higher rents. He lobbied for a monumental fountain in the plaza, insisting that it would help lure pedestrians off of Fifth Avenue. Renderings that include the plaza, fountain, and lavish roof gardens show only ornamental paving between the French and British buildings, however; the garden was ap-

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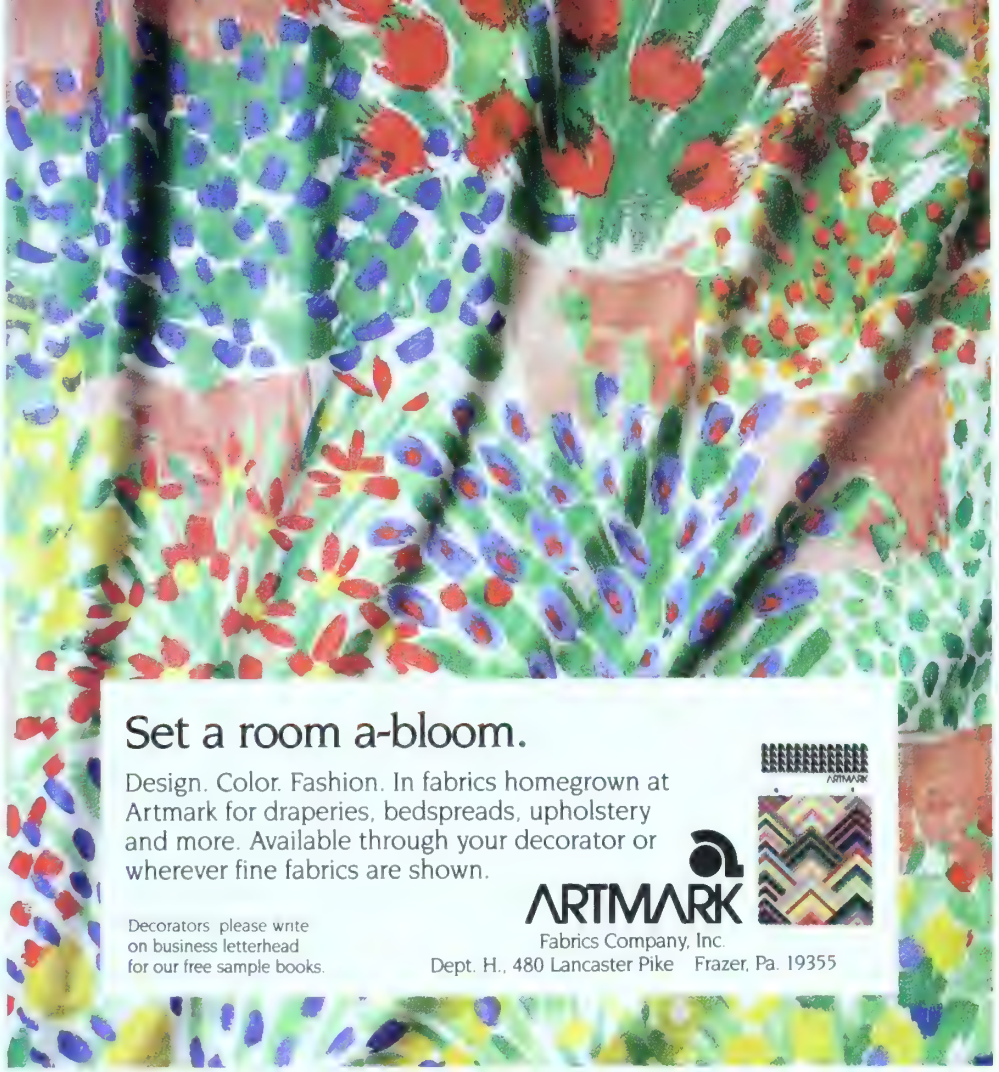
parently an afterthought. Architect Walter Kilham worked with Hood, and he seems to remember the gardens "growing" from the fountain; like most of Rockefeller's historians, he credits Hood as the force behind the Channel Gardens.

It is tempting to suppose that Rockefeller himself played a hand in planning the entrance to the project that would bear his name. As the promenade gardens were talking shape, he was sponsoring the re-creation of Williamsburg's Colonial houses and gardens and winding up a long-term commitment to the restoration of the buildings and grounds at Versailles. His dollars funded major work on Le Nôtre's Grand Canal—a project that pleased and perhaps inspired him.

Open space was essential—only a dramatic central axis would weave the middle of the site into the vital fabric of midtown

In fact, both the promenade and the plaza beyond were shaped almost entirely by the dictates of commercial real estate. The plaza was lowered in an effort to direct attention to the retail shops on the lower concourse; the sloped approach was designed to encourage pedestrian flow. The construction of central beds forced foot traffic to the edges of the promenade where potential buyers were closest to shop doors and windows. Seating was not originally provided, as movement was considered essential to the vitality of the retail space.

Hood liked the idea of using water to relieve the heat of city streets, and a watercourse was a fairly obvious feature for the promenade, given the fountain that terminates the axis. The sculptures that spout the Channel Gardens' water, however, were not introduced until a year after the main plaza



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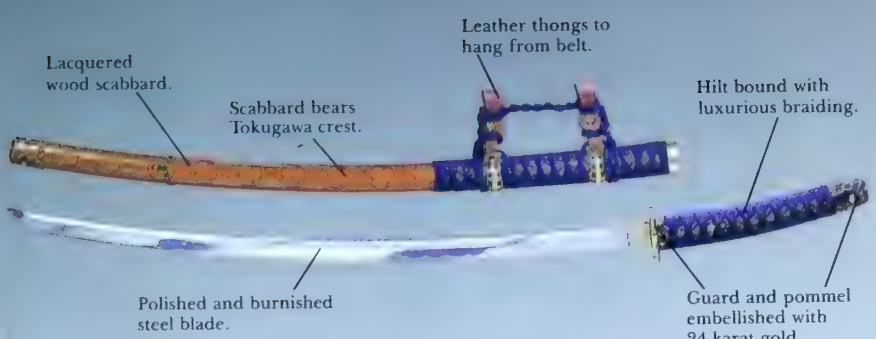
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spaces. Each pool is presided over by a sea god or nymph, with starfish and crabs covering the overflow ducts. The figures were designed by Rene Chambellan, a Hoboken sculptor. At the 1935 unveiling the pools were surrounded by yew hedges.

Flower-filled displays soon followed. Bedding schemes proved popular, and shows featuring Easter lilies, daffodils, tulips, and chrysanthemums became annual events. Recently the Channel beds have featured truly gardenlike plantings with shrubs and rich combinations of herbaceous plants. This new leaf is the result of a roof-garden tour, when the leader was badgered with questions from a young and clearly knowledgeable woman. Her interest



Topiary giraffe and his companions are clothed in *Ficus pumila.*

piqued his; upon learning that she was a landscape designer, he invited her to help with an exhibit in the Channel Gardens.

The exhibit was zinnias. The designer was Edwina vonGal—and in the past three years she devoted her considerable skill to ten Channel Gardens shows. As an outside consultant, Miss vonGal created the woodland garden, introduced a menagerie of giant topiaries, convinced the Center's reluctant management to try a flowerless show focusing on the tones and textures of ornamental grasses, and, with Dr. Hosack in mind, designed a fuchsia show that featured a series of herbal knots.

Miss vonGal quickly realized that the Channel Gardens were not designed by a gardener. The raised beds are barely large enough to hold small trees—a detail that makes establishing a suitable scale difficult. The beds are narrow, and because views of the water and Chambellan's nymphs are desirable, establishing depth is challenging. Rockefeller Center insists that the view of Prometheus be kept clear, and that further limits density. The sloping ground plane, which enhances the view to the plaza, tends to obliterate the effect of planting patterns. And finally the vast length and scale of the Channel beds are enough to awe even the most dauntless gardener. "We need lots, and we need it big," summarizes David Murbach, the Center's garden manager.

Each plant has to perform on schedule, and endurance is critical, for the shows last from two to five weeks.

The physical environment is hardly conducive to the cultivation of dazzling plants, however. The climate is always extreme. "And of course," Miss vonGal points out, "there are the people." About 250,000 people go through Rockefeller Center every day (more than visit most botanical gardens), and although very few pick flowers, they damage plants as they perch on the four-inch ledges, which were not designed for sitting.

Like Miss vonGal, Mr. Murbach understands that variety is essential to the success of the Channel Garden displays, and as a professional gardener, he is intent on incorporating a wealth of interesting material. Yet simplicity is clearly the key to success. An extremely limited palette is too risky, however, given the potential of crop failures and production problems. Displays that include unusual plants tend to be the most varied, by necessity. Locating four thousand tulips on a moment's notice is difficult. Tracking down an equivalent number of bleeding hearts in the last week of April is virtually impossible.

Despite the calculated design and difficult growing conditions, the Channel Gardens work. The promenade is an oasis in the midst of midtown, and in conjunction with the plaza's cafes and skating rink it is one of New York's most lively outdoor spaces. Architect I. M. Pei has suggested that the vitality is traceable to the proportions that Hood established. "The spaces are perhaps a little too small for the size of the buildings that surround them," Pei wrote. "But in a way I'm glad that it isn't larger, because it creates a special kind of intensity here, because of this exaggerated proportion. Just as exaggeration is necessary for effect in theater, so I think Rockefeller Center has succeeded in a way as very good theater." □

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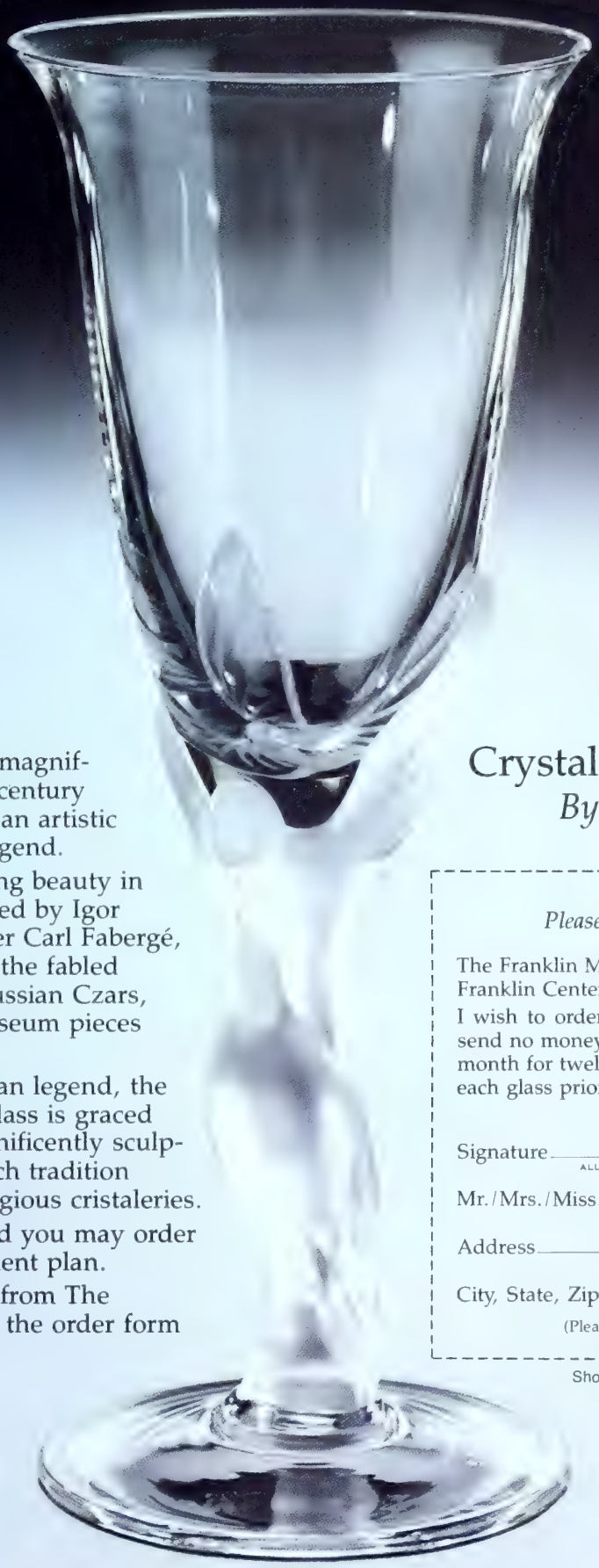
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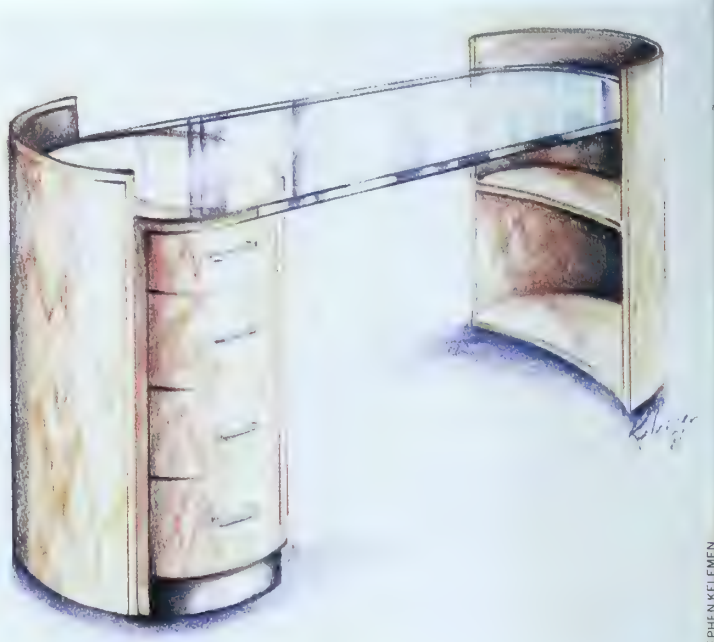
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VERTIGRIS-FINISHED PLATES

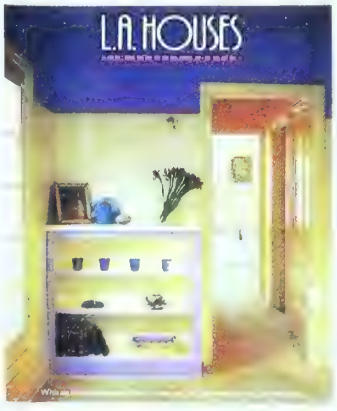
Artist David Bowman created this trio of vertigris-finished decorative plates, *above*. Tiny ball feet ensure steadiness for displaying these art objects made of a combination of forced oxidized copper and bronze. The plates come in 6-, 8-, and 16-inch sizes and range in price from $22 to $145. At Zona Rosa, New York.

JAY SPECTRE'S FURNITURE COLLECTION

The tradition for architects and interior designers to create furniture is being carried on by Jay Spectre, whose distinguished career has included recognition by the Smithsonian as one of their "Giants of Interior Design." Spectre's new collection of beds, tables, chairs, and occasional pieces designed for Century Furniture emphasizes soft lines and classical symmetry. He incorporates a variety of styles from Art Deco to Postmodern in materials including glass, wood, and metals. Pieces such as the dressing table, *below*, will be available at furniture stores nationwide.



STEPHEN KELEMEN



WEST COAST DESIGN

Leave it to Los Angeles to generate radical structures for living. Photographer-author Tim Street-Porter's book *L.A. Houses* takes a good look at the inventive, extroverted work of the area's cutting-edge architects, who see buildings as graphic art in three dimensions. Stewart, Tabori & Chang, $35.



EDWARD ADDEO

LUXURIOUS NEW COTTONS

Famed Italian couturier Gianni Versace has leapt into the field of decorative fabrics with an arresting collection of fifteen designs. The materials are richly colored and deeply textured. "His collection is classic and will never go out of style. It is the Wedgwood of the '80s," says Inger Elliott, president of China Seas, where the line is sold exclusively. The fabrics are woven at the Fischbacher mill in Switzerland. *Left:* The lucious floral superimposed on a jacquard texture is 100 percent cotton and lists at $135 a yard; Harry's Bar Stripe and the checkerboard faux-patchwork are a cotton and viscose blend and retail for $130.50. Fabrics at China Seas showrooms and their representatives in the U.S. and Canada.



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ON THE TRANSYLVANIA TURNPIKE

Memories of motoring through Rumania in 1934

By Patrick Leigh Fermor

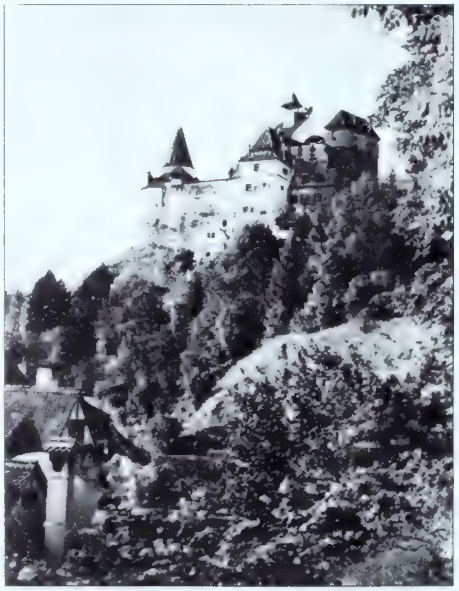


V. LEFTEROFF FPG

The last true Transylvanian sojourn and the longest unfolded some miles farther along the Mureş River (Maros in Hungarian) and every detail sticks in my mind.

I had heard of István as far back as Budapest and we had met once or twice among the moths and the limericks at Kápolnás in a kastély—owned by Count Jenö Teleki, a famous entomologist and authority on moths—where they loved him. István had been sent to school at the Theresianum, that Viennese establishment set up by Maria Theresa for sons of her noble subjects. He ran away to join a Hussar regiment during World War I and was commissioned at once, just in time for all the disasters. Later, during the Béla Kun regime, he escaped from one of Szamuely's execution squads and was involved in the troubled aftermath; and soon afterward Transylvania was ceded to Rumania. Cultivated, tall, fine-looking with a hawk's nose, a high forehead, and wide clear-blue eyes like a francolin's, he was a brilliant shot, horseman, and steeplechaser and a virtuoso in all he took up. He was now in his early thirties and at the height of his vigor; and his dash, charm, enterprise, and humor made him liked by everyone, though it sometimes landed him in scrapes, including four affairs with sabers, each time as the challenged party. Land reform soon left very little of an estate which, though it had always prospered, had never been enormous. His family's tenure had been long; his elderly parents still lived there. He was linked by a deep atavistic attachment to the place, and managing the remnant of arable and forest had kept him from seeking new fortunes abroad. I admired him very much, and we became great friends.

Above: Women in the fields, Rumania.
Below: Bran Castle, home of Count Dracula.



FPG

Why not stay on a month or two, he would urge. Or a year?

The kastély was much older than any I had stayed in so far. In aspect a mixture of manor house, monastery, and farmstead, it stood on a tree-covered knoll overlooking the Mureş; and the woods, rolling on beyond, climbed into the distance. A flattened arch through the massive ocher walls gave on a courtyard where gigantic chestnut trees still dropped their petals, and the

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pigeons on the cobbles underneath would suddenly take off with a noise like the wind. Two sheepdogs and their puppies always bounded forward in greeting and the young storks nesting on a moss-covered barn were beginning to stretch their necks among the scarlet legs of their parents. Stables, granaries, coach houses with carriages and wagons and sleighs lined one side of the yard and the other three were colonnades, like a cloister of square pillars sliced at the corners into octagons, and constantly traversed by the swish of the martins whose nests congregated there. Green-and-purple panes glimmered in a fanlight at the far end of an arcade, and the door beneath led to a loggia where we sat at night looking out over a wide vista of timber and water. Indoors, paraffin lamps shed their luster on the fine portrait of an ambassadorial ancestor and the familar properties of a Transylvanian interior; the escutcheon scattered about the house and carved over the gate showed a bent bow with an arrow pointing skyward; at a venture, as it were.

The summer solstice was past, peonies and lilac had both vanished, cuckoos had changed their tune and were making ready to fly. Roast corncobs appeared, trout from the mountains, cherries, then strawberries, apricots, peaches, and finally wonderful melons and raspberries. The scarlet blaze of paprika—there were two kinds on the table, one of them fierce as gunpowder—was cooled by cucumber cut thin as muslin and by soda splashed into glasses of wine already afloat with ice; this had been fetched from an igloolike undercroft among the trees where prudent hands had stacked it six months before, when—it was impossible to imagine it!—snow covered all. Wagons creaked under loads of apricots, yet the trees were still laden; they scattered the dust, wasps tunneled them, and wheels and footfalls flattened them to a yellow pulp; tall wooden vats bubbled among the dusty sunflowers, filling the yards with the sweet and heavy smell of their fermentation; and soon, even at midday, the newly distilled spirit began to bowl the peasants over like a sniper, flinging the harvesters prostrate and prone in every fragment of shadow. They snored among sheaves and haycocks and a mantle of flies covered them while the flocks crammed together under every spread of branches and not a leaf moved.





Top: The Rumanian countryside. *Above:* Colorfully painted peasant houses.

I knew that István and his family meant it when they suggested that I should stay all summer, so I wrote to London with rough dates and addresses for the dispatch of cash: this parasitic castle life had left my funds comparatively intact, but I would be needing some soon. "If you stayed on," István said one morning, "we could go and shoot chamois"—then, later, there would be stags and, later still, bears. When I said I had never shot anything larger than a rabbit, he said, "I'll teach you." And then, what about fox hunting with Baron Wesselényi's pack? I could manage that, except that I had no money. István smiled.

"Don't worry," he said, "neither have I. Nobody has."

It was during a crayfish hunt in a mountain stream that I first met Angéla. She was a few years older than I and married, but not happily. As it turned out, she was just as rash and impulsive as I was supposed to be, and prompted, I think, by amused affection on her side and rapt infatuation on mine, a lighthearted affinity had sprung up in a flash.

István suggested an irresistible plan: he would borrow a motorcar from a friend beyond Deva and the three of us would set out on a secret journey to the interior of Transylvania.

I collected my stuff and made my farewells, for after the jaunt I would strike south. The die was cast. The car arrived, the two of us set off, and in a few miles Angéla jumped in at the appointed place and we drove east rejoicing.

The borrowed vehicle was an old-fashioned, well-polished blue touring car with room for all three in front. It had a canvas hood with a celluloid window in the back and a scarlet rubber bulb, which, after a moment's pressure, reluctantly sent a raucous moo out of a convoluted brass trumpet. The roads were not good: the car pitched about the ruts and the potholes like a boat in a choppy sea, and the dust of our progress alongside the Mureş formed a ghostly cylinder. Hovering in our wake, it rose and enfolded us at every stop and we arrived in the old princely capital of Transylvania like three phantoms.

We were storming and bucketing through the land of Canaan. Rows of beehives, brought up for the summer, were aligned by the edge of the woods.

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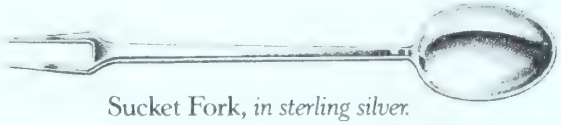
King's Arms Brass Trivet.
The design is taken from the coat of arms on the sign of the famous King's Arms Tavern in Williamsburg. Also available in iron.



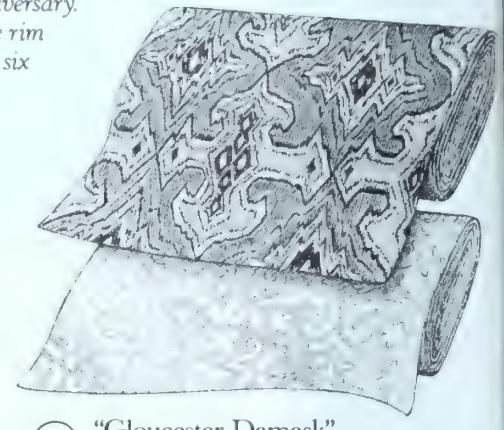
(50th) Wedgwood Commemorative Bowl.
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(50th) Oriental Painted Mirror.
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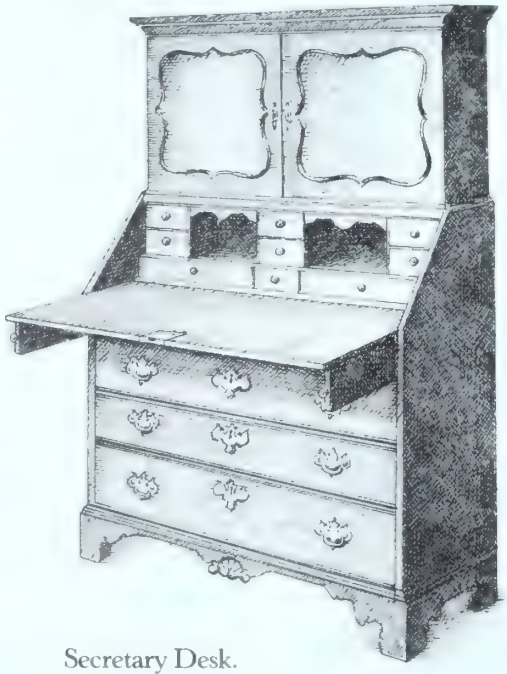
Sucket Fork, *in sterling silver. Originally used for desserts that needed both spoon and fork. Just the thing today for cocktail olives or onions.*



(50th) "Gloucester Damask" and "Bargello" Fabrics.
One is copied from a 17th-century fabric, adapted in silk and cotton. The other is an upholstery-weight woven fabric inspired by antique needlework.



Air-twist Stemware.
This spiral form was developed about 1735 and was popular throughout the middle of the 18th century.



Secretary Desk.
The original is American, about 1770, Chippendale. The unit on the top is a bookcase. The apron, quite elaborate, carries a shell carving.



Queen Anne Flatware, *in sterling silver. Recognized for years as a most distinguished reproduction of 18th-century flatware. Note the graceful shapes of the rat-tailed spoons, three-tined forks, and pistol-handled knives.*

Colonial Williamsburg offers a few select pieces not yet to be found in its catalogue.



Claw-and-ball Andirons. *Reproductions, in solid brass, of pieces made in the late 18th century. Claw-and-ball foot was derived from an Oriental design, introduced by English cabinetmakers around 1710.*



Sterling Silver Coffeepot. *The original of this elegantly simple piece was made by Charles Le Roux, a New York silversmith. Note the contrast of curved and straight planes.*



Delft Plate. *So impeccable are such copies of delftware that we ask the maker to impress an identifying date into each piece so that none may be mistaken for the original.*

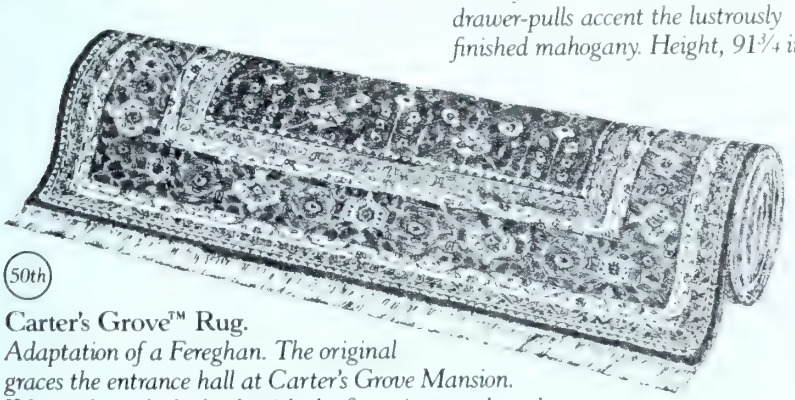


Pewter Tankard. *An example of pewter at its best: cast, turned, burnished, then polished to a soft sheen.*



50th

Bombé Chest-on-chest. *A magnificent reproduction of an 18th-century piece. The original is on display at the Wallace Gallery. Twenty-seven sand-cast brass drawer-pulls accent the lustrously finished mahogany. Height, 91¾ in.*



50th

Carter's Grove™ Rug. *Adaptation of a Fereghan. The original graces the entrance hall at Carter's Grove Mansion. Woven through the back with the finest imported wools, skein-dyed, then washed to produce a rich luster and mellow colors.*

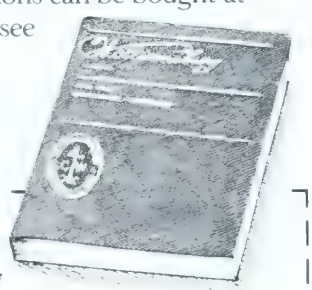
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Williamsburg

The sun filled the place with evening light and kindled the windows and the western flanks of cupolas and steeples and many belfries

The slopes were striped with vines and scattered with sheaves and ricks, and chaff from threshing mingled with the dust. Flocks and herds were beginning to throw longer shadows when we reached a high point with an entire town spread below; and, getting out under the walls of a vigilant eighteenth-century citadel, we gazed across an untidy fall of roofs. At the bottom bridges spanned a riverbend to an older part of the city of Cluj–Kolozsvár–Klausenburg on the other side. Dropping toward the watershed, the sun filled the place with evening light and kindled the windows and the western flanks of cupolas and steeples and many belfries, darkening the eastern walls with shadow; and as we gazed, one of them began to strike the hour and another took up the challenge, followed by a third, and soon enormous tonnages of sectarian bronze were tolling their ancient rivalries into the dusk. Even the Armenians, who had settled here a couple of centuries ago, sent out a chime, and only the synagogues were silent.

As we climbed back into the motorcar, a swarm of small Gypsies rushed on us from caves and shanties, crowded on the running board and the bonnet, and entangled us in cries and supplication and a mesh of arms like brown tendrils, which we could only unloose by flinging coins beyond their heads like confetti. Set free in a second, the car slid downhill and across one of the bridges and into the city.

Our journey was a secret. The town wasn't as perilous as it would have been in the winter season, with its parties and theaters and the opera in full blast, but we weren't supposed to be there, Angéla least of all. István reveled in the clandestine atmosphere and so did we; it gave a stimulating comic-opera touch to our journey; so we left the conspicuous car outside our quarters and stole about the town like footpads. István went ahead and peered around corners for fear of bumping into acquaintances; and, sure enough, he suddenly whispered, "About turn!" and shepherded us into an ironmonger's and colorman's shop where, backs to the door, we stooped intently over a selection of mousetraps until the danger was past. It was someone he had been at school with in Vienna.

The old city was full of town houses and palaces, most of them empty now, with their owners away for the harvest. Thanks to this, István had telephoned and borrowed a set of handsome vaulted rooms in one of them, not far from the house where Matthias Corvinus was born.

There was much evidence of his reign. In the great market square a magnificent equestrian statue showed the king in full armor, surrounded by his knights and commanders, while armfuls of crescented and horse-tailed banners were piled as trophies at his feet. We had a quick look at the Baroque arcades and books and treasures in the splendid Banffy Palace. I wonder if I am right in remembering that Liszt gave recitals there? I think *Don Giovanni* was sung in Hungarian in the triple-named city even earlier than in Budapest. We entered the great Catholic church of Saint Michael—a Gothic building that had looked enormous from the citadel—just as everyone was streaming out from vespers, and the dusk indoors, lit only by flickering racks of tapers, looked vaster still and umbrageously splendid.

A hotel at the other end of the main square, called the New York—a great meeting place in the winter season—drew my companions like a magnet. István said the barman had invented an amazing cocktail—surpassed only by the one called Flying in the Vier Jahreszeiten bar in Munich—which it would be criminal to miss. He stalked in, waved the all-clear from the top of some steps, and we settled in a strategic corner while the demon barman went mad with his shaker. There was nobody else in the bar; it was getting late and the muffled lilt of the waltz from

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Die Fledermaus hinted that everyone was in the dining room. We sipped with misgiving and delight among a Regency neo-Roman décor of cream and oxblood and gilding: Corinthian capitals spread their acanthus leaves and trophies of quivers, and hunting horns, lyres, and violins were caught up with festoons between the pilasters.

We left, walking with care and suitable stealth, and on air; then dived into a hooded carriage, which would have been a sleigh in winter, and clip-clopped to a discreet Gypsy restaurant outside the town, returning to our fine vaulted quarters fired with paprika and glissandos.

How exhilarating it was next morning to be woken by the discord of reciprocally schismatic bells while the half-shuttered July sunlight scattered stripes across the counterpane! Furred and frogged, the magnates on the walls of the breakfast room surveyed us with their hands serenely crossed on the hilts of their scimitars. We looked at them in turn and admired the many tiers of emblazoned bindings. Heralded by fumes, a very old retainer in a baize apron brought coffee and croissants from a distant part of the house and talked to us as we spread and dipped and sipped; and his tidings from the night before unloosed a long moment of gloom: Dollfuss had been assassinated by the Nazis. But, as with the June purge a month earlier, our mood was such that the gloom didn't last much longer than breakfast: it all seemed such a long way to the west. But it was only five months since I had seen the small chancellor leading that dismal procession in Vienna, after the February troubles. I hadn't even heard of Cluj or Kolozsvár or Klausenburg then, but Transylvania had been a familiar name as long as I could remember. It was the very essence and symbol of remote, leafy, half-mythical strangeness; and, on the spot, it seemed remoter still and more fraught with charms. Under their sway we were impervious to omens, and the spell of comedy, adventure, and delight that surrounded our journey would have needed something still more drastic and closer at hand to break it.

No mechanical vehicle except ours desecrated the quiet of these byways.



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For miles we met only cattle and a cart or two drawn by the sturdy local horses. Another village with a spiked church loomed and fell back, and ahead of us, rearing like a wave, the enormous mass of the Carpathians climbed into the sky. It was the highest stretch of the Transylvania Alps, and its highest peaks are only overtopped by the crests of the High Tatra, far away south of Cracow on the borders of Czechoslovakia and Poland—over three hundred miles northwest, for an eagle bent on a change of peaks. They are also called the Făgăraş Mountains. The old chronicler's wild forested region of the Vlachs and the Pechenegs, it had often been a domain of the princes of Walachia. Like the ranges we saw to the northeast from the Szekler country, it was full of bears and wolves, and the old eponymous town and castle lay at its feet. I had expected a daunting perpendicular stronghold, but, apart from the donjon inside, it turned out to be a massive rectangle of ocher and brick color, almost a quarter of a mile square and slotted by embrasures, with a circular bastion jutting at each corner. Medallions with indecipherable escutcheons crumbled over a great gate. It was the famous Bethlen Gábor who gave the fortifications their final shape, and its best-known besiegers were the janisseries of Achmet Balibeg against a desperate garrison of five hundred Magyars and Szeklers.

The moment we had struck the highroad after those hushed Saxon lanes, we had run over a nail and had to change a wheel. Once inside Făgăraş, we waited in a garden restaurant by the fortress while it was mended, and Angéla went to telephone. István had wanted to drive on east to the important old Saxon town of Braşov near the Tatars Pass, to spend the night and feast and look at the Black Church there. But too little time was left; we would have to think of turning westward. Then Angéla came back from the telephone: the subterfuges and stratagems on which our journey depended were in danger of breakdown; the only remedy was to head westward—and by train—that very day. While we were talking, a Gypsy mechanic was strapping the mended tire into its recess at the back of the front mudguard. István's eyes lit up at the sight, as though inspiration had de-

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SOMETHING
BEAUTIFUL IS ABOUT
TO HAPPEN...

scended. "We'll stick to our old plan," he said, "but make it a day earlier." Angéla wondered whether we would be cutting it too fine. "You wait and see," István said, emptying his glass. "To horse!"

The rain-scoured landscape and the flocks of clouds rushing across the sky had made us lower the hood. On our left the huge mass of the mountains heaved itself up in a succession of steep folds. Wooded gorges pierced the foothills, and the higher slopes were darkened by scarves of forest until the bare rock emerged in a confusion of rugged humps and peaks. On our right the trees, which followed the course of the Olt River, swayed toward us and veered away many times, half-keeping us company until the river twisted due south and coiled away between the chasm that led to the Red Tower Pass. A few miles before we lost the river, István pointed across it to a point where a thirteenth-century Cistercian abbey, the oldest Gothic building in Transylvania, stood in ruins.



HORST

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The gentle hills rolling to the north were scattered with Saxon thorps; then all the villages were filled with Rumanian sounds once again. István charioted us with skill and speed, braking in plenty of time in the village streets for geese to hiss their way across.

When we approached the outskirts of Sibiu–Hermannstadt–Nagyszeben, István groaned aloud. In the Szekler capital the day before, we had clean forgotten to look at the Teleki library; now in this ancient Saxon town there was no time to look at anything at all. Churches rose in plenty and fabulous buildings beckoned. Above all, there was the Brukenthal Palace, where the library was packed with manuscripts and incunabula; there was a gallery with room after room of Dutch, Flemish, and Italian painters. As a tease, István enlarged on these splendors, "Memling, Frans Hals, Rubens . . ." he said, his hand leaving the steering wheel with an airy flourish.

Angéla said, "You read that in a book."

". . . Titian, Magnasco, Lorenzo Lotto . . ." he went on. Then he described the charm of the inns, the wonders of local Saxon cooking, their skill with suckling pigs and ducks and trout, sighed, "No time! No time!" and drove on down cobbled lanes and across marketplaces and great flagged squares. We might have been in Austria or Bavaria. Once more the names over the shops were all Saxon. Zoological and heraldic inn signs hung from stanchions along massive shady arcades, and no rustic discretion hampered the Baroque buildings all round us. Tall casements rose between louvered shutters with twirling hinges; there were triangular and bow-topped pediments and houses plastered yellow and ocher and saffron and green and peach and mauve and at either end of the serrated rooftrees elliptic moldings elaborated the crowsteps of the gables; these were pierced by lunettes adorned with flourishes and scrolls, and the serried juts of dormer windows broke up the steep slants of rose-colored tile. It was the perfect urban counterpart to the rustic masonry of the villages. Half-timbered buildings appeared; stalwart towers barred with stringcourses were faced with the gilded numbers of clock dials, crowned with onion domes of tile or sulfur green copper and finally tipped with spikes above a froth of unpollarded mulberries and chestnut trees. Angéla had never been there before either. Our excitement and frustration ran deep, and as the motorcar threaded its way through a maze of stalls and cart horses, a new thought smote: as far as my journey went, these

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Another village with a spiked church loomed and fell back, and ahead of us, rearing like a wave, the enormous mass of the Carpathians climbed into the sky, the highest stretch of Transylvanian Alps

houses and streets and towers were the last outposts of an architectural world I was leaving for good.

But no sooner had we struck the old highway beside the Mureş—a few miles south of the Apulon–Apulum–Bălgrad–Weissenburg–Karlsburg–Gyulafehérvár–Alba Iulia turning—than fate began to scatter our route with troubles. New since our passage there two days earlier, an untimely road gang with a steamroller and red flags had roped off potholes that had remained untouched for years. Next we were held up by a collusion of sleep-walking water buffalo with a gigantic threshing machine crawling along a stretch of road with woods on one side and on the other a sharp drop to a water meadow; and finally, a mile or so short of the last station before our destination, there was a puncture, the second that day. Just as we were tightening the last screws on the freshly patched-up spare wheel, the hoot of a train reached us from behind. Then we saw the familiar smoke plume appearing along the valley and heard the puffing and the clatter, and there it was; and as we were chucking the old wheel in the back, it passed us and disappeared sedately round a bend. We leaped aboard as nimbly as firemen and István seized the wheel. Swing wells and fields of maize and tobacco shot behind and the dust rose all about us in expanding clouds. The train was slowing up for Simeria, the last halt before our target; and just as it was moving on again, we drew alongside. As it picked up speed, we were neck and neck; the passengers peered out in amazement, and we felt like Cherokees or Assiniboins galloping around a prairie train in feathers and bisons' horns. István was crouched over the wheel, shirtsleeves rolled up, grinning fiercely like a cinder-eyed demon of speed with ribbed black-mackintosh wings; and as we pulled ahead, he let out a joyful howl. Then, as the train dropped farther behind, we sailed into familiar territory. The tall hill of Deva, crowned with its ruined fortress, heaved into sight, with the Hátszeg Mountains beyond.

When we reached Deva station, the train was just coming into sight again. We seized Angéla's bag and started off over the tracks. The stationmaster waved for us to stop, then recognizing István, turned it into a salute; and when the train drew up, we were serenely waiting for it under the acacias, as immutable a part of a Rumanian platform as the three gold rings and the scarlet top of the stationmaster's cap. Leaning down from her carriage window, Angéla threaded crimson buttonholes into our shirts from her bunch of roses and tiger lilies: our farewells had been made and I can still feel the dust on her smooth cheek. When the flag and the whistle unloosed the train, she kept waving, then took off the kerchief knotted around her throat and flourished that instead and we gesticulated frantically back. As it gathered speed, the long kerchief floated level until the train, looking very small under the slant of the woods, dwindled and vanished; then it was only a feather of smoke among the Mureş trees. Angéla was about to pass all of our old haunts and all the stepping-stones of my particular journey—half a lifetime ago, it seemed—crossing the Rumanian-Hungarian frontier at Curtici and Lökösháza. After that, the railway line over the Great Plain would set her down, an hour before midnight, at the East Station in Budapest. □



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FURNISHING A NEW AGE

New York's Gallery of Applied Arts sets its sights on extraordinary new designs by artists and architects

By Michael Boodro

It takes a lot to be noticed in that citadel of chic, Manhattan's 57th Street. Any invasion must be carefully planned to successfully penetrate one of the world's great concentrations of elegance in art, antiques, fashion, and design; commerce at its most refined, rarefied, and competitive.

Few establishments have accomplished this difficult endeavor with the speed or the élan of the Gallery of Applied Arts. With its diverse array of high-style, handcrafted furniture and functional objects commissioned from prominent artists and designers, the Gallery has capitalized on the visual arts trends of the 1980s; the public's interest in artworks and the emergence of the artist star; the increasing prices of fine antiques, which make their acquisition impossible for many; a growing boredom with Modernism and the adoption by professionals and clients alike of decorative, elaborate, and historically allusive design; the rise of eclectic décor; and the desire to buy a unique design statement.

In addition to such furniture designers and craftsmen as Wendell Castle and Bob Trotman, the Gallery offers functional pieces by the painters and sculptors Robert Graham, Tina Girouard, Richard Nonas, Lynda Benglis, Ned Smyth, R. M. Fischer, Robert Kushner, and Robert Zakanitch. There is even a table designed by photographer Robert Mapplethorpe.

The Gallery has been indefatigable in attempting to merge a prestige image with a slick, avant-garde style. Its space, which actually overlooks 56th Street, was designed by Windigo Architects as a complex of small, domestic-scaled rooms, the largest of which is devoted to changing exhibitions, either theme shows or larger presentations of the work of one designer. The remaining rooms hold a varied and frequently changed array of pieces ranging from large consoles to ashtrays. The Gallery's mailings are elaborate, colorful, and often unusual. And last fall, when they were launching a new line of furniture by the young Egyptian-French designer Patrick Naggar, a poster featuring his dashing portrait was plastered around the city on building sites and telephone poles, seemingly not out of place next to movie posters and announcements of rock concerts.

Yet the voices behind this somewhat grandiose façade are surprisingly unprepossessing. Joe Duke, a serious







Far right: Patrick Naggar furniture in main room of gallery, including the Hell's Angel chair, third from right. In contrast, *above,* the handcrafted naïf-style cat chair, and, *right,* camel storage box of Toulouse artist Gérard Rigot.

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young man, speaks with the precision of a craftsman and designer, and indeed several of his works are on display. Kate Gubelmann is more energetic and engagingly direct. Duke explains that the Gallery was opened in October of 1984, partly to serve as a showroom for the products of Arc International, the manufacturing firm of which he is president. Originally formed to produce and market his own furniture designs, Arc, located in Jacksonville, Florida, now produces work by almost thirty artists and designers and the Gallery handles the works of several others on consignment, usually in special exhibitions such as recent ones devoted to folding screens and children's furniture and toys.



Beneath a sketch, a Patrick Naggar table and chair.

"It's taken us years to put this together," says Duke, gesturing at the elegant furniture, rare woods rubbed to a glossy sheen, fanciful light fixtures, vases loaded with flowers, strange ceramic bowls full of fruit. "We had to define the concept, find the space, do the renovation." The partners in Windigo Architects, M. Louis Goodman and James Gubelmann, Kate's husband, are also backers of the Gallery. The Gallery's management and complex persona is completed by Patrick Steed, a tall, slick-haired, and solicitous young British man who serves as director.

"I formed Arc International in 1981," Duke continues. "I had been trying to license my furniture designs to other manufacturers, but that's a tough row to hoe. I would submit materials and they'd be returned unopened. It's frustrating. I knew my ideas were good, but I didn't know what to do with them. I started finding people to execute my designs in small woodworking shops, and I came across a lot of talented people. It took me three years of development time, but then I formed Arc to execute my own designs and some of theirs as well. There are actually two separate corporations," he explains, "Arc and the Gallery, which acts as a showroom but also presents other works."

"Our product is different from what you might find, say, in the D&D Building," says Gubelmann, referring to the well-known Manhattan resource center for interior designers. "What we have is not fine art, but they're not mass-produced products, either. They're something in between. They're all handmade and some of them are in limited editions. We go to artists to get their ideas for functional objects. That's often why we get such interesting results."

"In the past the problem with making something that's one of a kind," says Duke, obviously speaking from experience, "has been that the maker couldn't charge enough for the hours of labor put in. If you divide the price by the number of hours put in, you end up making no money. What Arc does is take over the preproduction development phase and ensures that the cost is spread out over a run. It's not high volume, just numbers sufficient to make the pieces economically feasible. The end product is similar to one of a kind, but we've improved the economy of scale. Plus we're making the works available to a larger audience." He pauses and grins. "We're trying to make the very best furniture today, and I think we're coming close to it."

Not surprisingly, all this creativity, design innovation, and exquisite handwork, not to mention the high-toned packaging, does not come cheap. Prices for a Wendell Castle sideboard of quilted mahogany and ebony can climb into the many thousands. But Steed points out that a Patrick Naggar floor lamp is only a few hundred and a Richard Nonas welded steel ashtray costs less than a hundred. The range is deliberate. Says Duke, "We're about commerce, but we're also about expos-

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ZALES
JEWELERS
Leading with Style

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ing the public to what's new. We wanted to make ourselves known to professional interior designers, but we didn't want to have a trade-only showroom. We want to allow everybody to look."

The three find a diverse audience responding to the Gallery's wares, including many younger customers. One surprise, says Duke, is the interest of people who mainly collect antiques. "For a very long period," he says, "during the height of Modernism, most furniture was not handmade, not really beautiful. So these people bought antiques. But our pieces have that quality, the evidence of the human hand.

"People don't realize what we have here. They may know Robert Graham's sculptures, but they don't know what to expect when they hear he's designed a chair or a table. It's really not a new idea, what we're doing," Duke acknowledges. Steed mentions the British Vortacists, the Wiener Werkstätte, and the Bauhaus, all of which encouraged artists to turn their attentions to utilitarian objects. But what is unusual about the Gallery is that it promotes no single aesthetic or design philosophy. Indeed, the various styles it shows differ vastly from one another. They include Duke's own Postmodern Etruscan Highboy of mahogany, ebony, and sterling, Goodman's Big Comfortable Upholstered Sofa, almost a cartoon of 1930s styles, Elizabeth Browning Jackson's geometric, futuristic aluminum lounge chair, and Richard Nonas's stark, minimalist welded steel chairs and tables.



Robert Graham designed the table on left. Love seat is by Mitch Ryerson.

This mix of styles is both a reflection of the current multiplicity of the art and design scene and an outcome of the Gallery's five-person ad hoc collaborative review board. Says Gubelmann, "We all vote." Duke adds, "The vote doesn't have to be unanimous, just a majority." Steed adds, "We're looking for achieved design, not work that's experimental. All of our pieces are eminently practical. You can definitely take them home and use them."

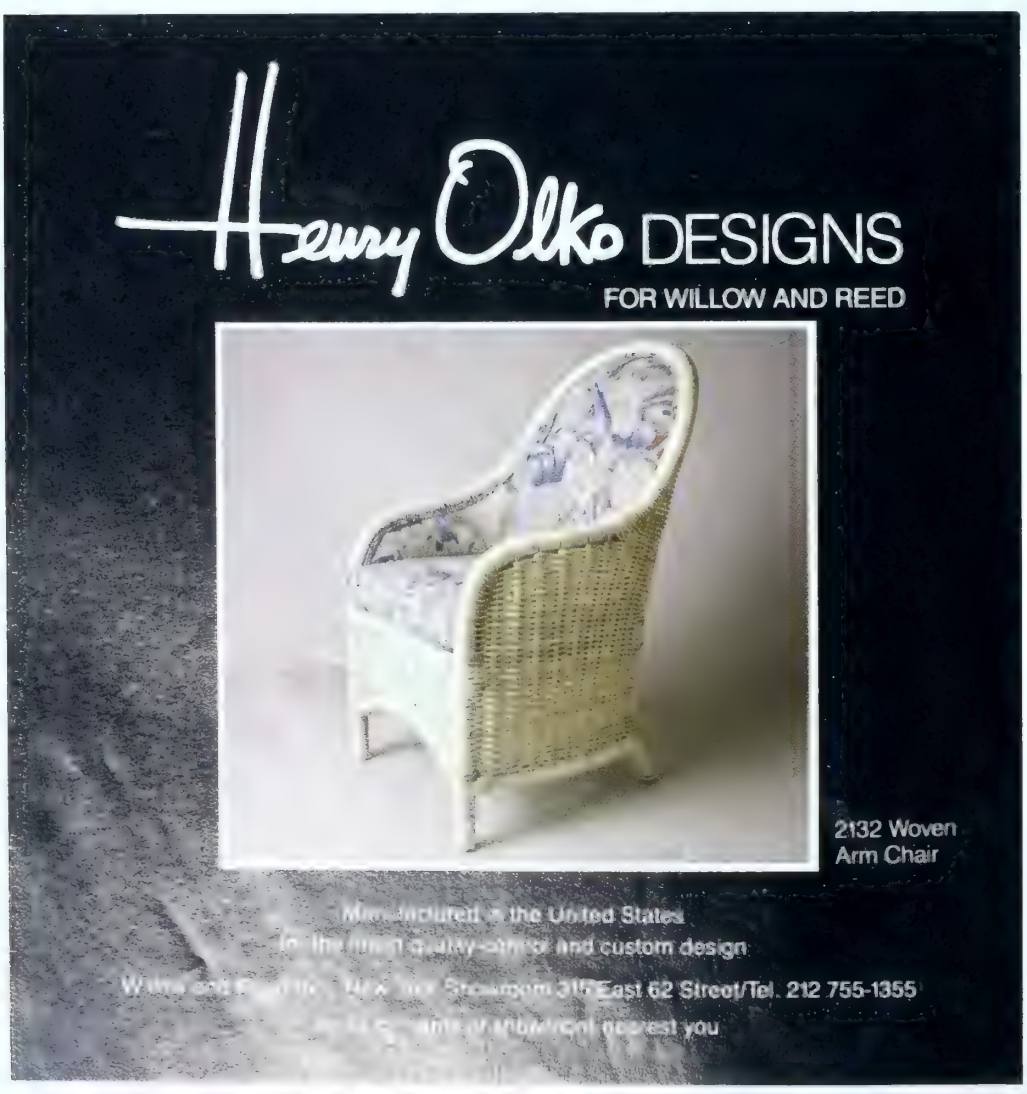
Despite its high profile, the Gallery is reluctant to expand its stable to any great extent, although it will launch a new designer this fall. Upcoming temporary exhibitions include one planned for the summer of furniture for outside the home. "Kind of an Arc Adirondack," says Gubelmann. "There are a lot of furniture problems we want to come up with solutions for. We're not just about living-room stuff."

Duke finds most of their design input comes primarily from three different backgrounds: fine artists, architects and professional designers, and furniture makers. Most of the furniture makers have studied at Boston University, the Rhode Island School of Design, or Rochester Institute or have served as apprentices with Wendell Castle. Gubelmann herself studied design at Parsons with David Easton and Duke got his training in architecture and engineering offices until, he says, "I discovered my heart was not really in architecture. I found I was much more interested in objects."

"We're constantly dealing with things I could never have conceived of," says Gubelmann. "Every day is an education."

"We're in the business of furniture," Steed states. "Yes," agrees Gubelmann with a broad smile. "In the end, we're just furniture salesmen."

Yes, sure. And 57th Street is really not that different from a suburban shopping mall. □





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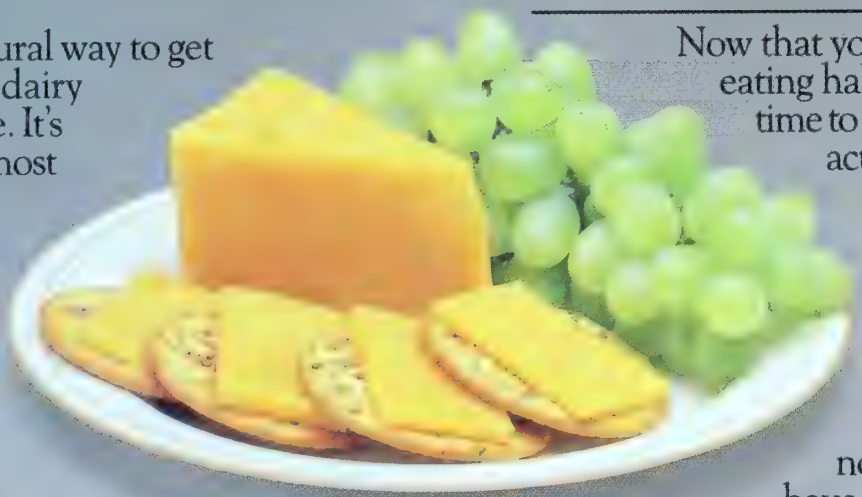
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BY STEVEN M. L. ARONSON
PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROBERTO GILI



In the front hall, *opposite*, hangs *The White Shawl* by the American Impressionist painter Richard Miller. The stencils were adapted by Peter Marino from the Edwardian Art Nouveau curtains that frame the doorway into the living room, *this page*, where a Charles X clock is on the Frank Furness fireplace under *In a Rug Bazaar* by George Henry Hall. The English Regency table on left is from Gene Tyson and the 19th-century Sultanabad carpet from Doris Leslie Blau.







In the living room, *opposite, Lady on a Gold Couch,* c. 1906, by F. C. Frieseke hangs over the sofa. A large bronze of Nathan Hale by Frederick MacMonnies rises on the right beyond the goffered silk pillows; the fabric on two of these is 17th century. Imperial Russian dessert plates are on the 19th-century table from Gene Tyson. *Above:* In another view of the same room, two English 19th-century carved walnut chairs face each other to the left of a French Empire chair. The rosewood piano is c. 1870.

"Peter Marino," Marie-Hélène de Rothschild replied when asked recently by a dinner companion to name the most sought-after architect/interior designer on the international axis. In this the age of nickel, Marino's penchant for time-tested luxury, indeed opulence, his unfailing attention to detail, his lavish use of wood paneling, hand stenciling, and gold and silver leafing, not to mention the stable of superb artisans he has discovered and cultivated to carry out his decorative designs, have attracted such clients as Marella and Giovanni Agnelli, Philippe Niarchos, Jacqueline de Ribes, Carla Fendi, Yves Saint Laurent, and Valentino (only fittingly has Marino been labeled "the designer's designer").

"Appropriateness is the central point of architecture. A palace should look like a palace, a loft should look like a loft, and a hot-dog stand should look like a hot-dog stand," he states. "And an apartment in the Dakota should look like an apartment in the Dakota, not a sheikh's spread in the Olympic Tower," he adds pointedly, appraising what he has accomplished for Christopher Whittle.

"I'd been living in a two-room log cabin just outside Knoxville, and the Dakota was the first apartment building I ever saw in New York—it spoiled me for other apartments," says the 39-year-old Whittle, one of the two Tennessee whiz kids who while still in college founded the 13–30 Group, a specialty-magazine publishing corporation, and went on to buy and resuscitate *Esquire* magazine. Today Whittle, while retaining the title of chairman of *Esquire,* where he is no longer active, is chairman and chief executive officer of Whittle Communications, which





In the dining room, presided over by a large Flemish chandelier, griffins are the reigning motif: on the firescreen, Frank Furness mantel, and Directoire carpet. Over the fireplace hangs a 1645 still life by Paulus van den Bosch, between twelve 18th-century French paintings of Roman emperors. A crouching lion by Antoine-Louis Barye is on the French 19th-century table, and the chairs covered in Cowan & Tout silk damask are George III.





includes 21 media properties. To this son of an Etowah, Tennessee, country doctor and descendant of Ethan Allen of the Green Mountain Boys, the Dakota represented everything that Manhattan had to offer.

For Marino also, the pale-yellow-brick Victorian fortress on Central Park West at 72nd Street was the territory of his heart's desire. Constructed in 1884 by Henry Hardenbergh, who would later design the Plaza and old Waldorf-Astoria hotels in New York as well as the Copley Plaza in Boston and the Willard in Washington, the building was a triumph of splendid detail: carved marble mantels, elaborate stone friezes, arched and beamed floors three feet thick, paneled oak-and-mahogany walls. In the late 1960s the Dakota became a tourist attraction when Roman Polanski featured its exterior in *Rosemary's Baby;* its interior, however, was already the setting for film stars attracted to the drama of its dimensions and the privacy it afforded—everybody from Boris Karloff to Lauren Bacall has lived there.

The six-room apartment that Whittle purchased was so dilapidated he and Marino soon found themselves giving the lie to the following stanza of Marya Mannes's "Ballad of the Dakota":

Oh, who of us would change a jot,
Or even an iota—
We happy few whose happy lot
Is Life in the Dakota? . . .

"There isn't an inch of this flat—ceilings, walls, moldings, floors—that was here when we started," Marino says, adding that a good renovation is sometimes the best preservation. *(Text continued on page 276)*

In the terra-cotta-colored guest room/study, *above left, Lady at a Writing Table,* c. 1890, by Julie Marest hangs to the left of pen-and-ink drawings of European street scenes by Lester Hornby. On the right is a French Empire desk and chair, across from a slipper chair in its original fabric, c. 1865. *Above right:* Over the Northern Italian walnut bed, c. 1800, hangs a study for a painting of a parish church in Paris by Henry Lerolle. The chair is Charles X and the carpet a 19th-century Oushak from Doris Leslie Blau. *Opposite:* In the guest room/study, kilim carpets are hung as curtains on either side of the sleeping alcove and are the inspiration for the stencil patterns for walls and ceiling.



PERFECT PLACEMENT

Nora Kaye and Herbert Ross's adventurous collections are as theatrical as their careers

BY LEO LERMAN PHOTOGRAPHS BY KAREN RADKAI

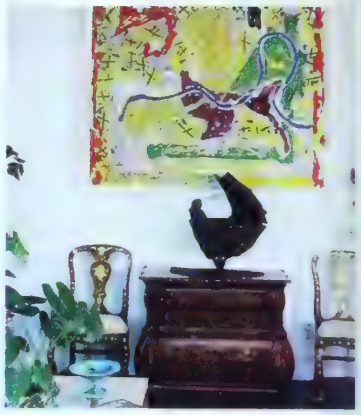




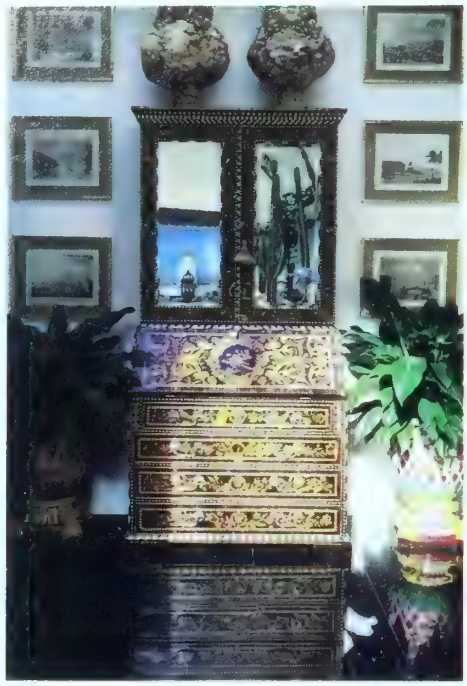
A luminous island for formal dining. A wall of Robert Rauschenberg's color-glowing *Sling Shots*. The setting: a mix of crystal—all periods—and contemporary black-purple glass. Chairs: Breuer, canvas-seated. Typically Ross: the surprise of the superb, very-18th-century Venetian chandelier.



























Beyond the vintage Ceylon settee and the modern very easy chair, *above,* is the terrace with its black pool. On the table made specially to be topped by original Burne-Jones tiles: a tiny tea set, a Victorian birdcage, rare 19th-century majolica. The terra-cotta dog is circa Charles II. *Opposite, left to right from top:* 18th-century Portuguese devotional mannequins. Nora Kaye Ross and Herbert, deep in felicity and scripts. On red-lacquer Dutch chest flanked by inlaid Dutch chairs Brigaud's *The Boat,* and over it, Frank Stella's *Pergusa the Double.* Fantasy 19th-century Chinese export clock, an epitome Ross piece. Silver-and-ivory-mounted desk, probably from Goa, c. 1820, framed by early-19th-century Russian views. Herbert's theatrical prizes: a wall of Victorian tinsel prints, a 19th-century toy replica of a Chinese playhouse in full performance on a carved George I table. Sumida Gawa ware beneath a bright Esteban Vicente painting. A colloquy of crocodiles and alligators. Primitive carving of a pert stag head on a Chinese root table, accompanied by two astonishingly comfortable root chairs. Mid-Victorian Japanese export clock. From Goa, a mother-of-pearl and tortoiseshell inlaid chest. Early-19th-century Russian chairs, bamboo-patterned majolica, kitschy bric-a-brac, and a multiple from Frank Stella's *Haggadah* series.

Herbert says, "We bought things because we lived in rented houses or hotel rooms. . . . The house is an *assemblage* of Nora's personality. I just stop her from making terrible mistakes."

Nora says, "It's true! It's true! I just can't imagine what this house would be if I were left to my own devices."

Well, I have known Nora Kaye Ross for 45 years, during which time Antony Tudor created *Pillar of Fire* for her and they revolutionized ballet, and Jerome Robbins created *The Cage* for her, and she was America's greatest dramatic ballerina, and I can't remember when she didn't have a passion for beautiful, extravagant, amusing, frequently kitschy things of quality. I have known Herbert Ross almost as long as I have known Nora, during which time he hoofed his way from chorus to "Choreography By" for a star-fraught spate of Broadway and Hollywood musicals and two superb works for Ballet Theatre—*Caprichos* and *The Maids.* He then directed a rollicking roster of movies, which to date have accumulated 44 Oscar nominations—*The Seven-Percent Solution, The Turning Point, Pennies from Heaven.* About to be released, at this writing, is the untitled Michael J. Fox movie, and some time this November Herbert and Nora and Mikhail Baryshnikov should be "wrapping" their movie version of that ballet glory *Giselle.* Herbert directed, Misha staged and, of course, danced Albrecht to Alessandra Ferri's distraught peasant girl, and Nora coexecutive-produced. Whether acknowledged on screen or not, Nora is a potent force in any film her husband directs. And that brings us back to the major Ross



A sum-up of the Ross collecting style: David Hockney's multiple *Paper Pool No. 22* juxtaposed to an aggregation of Chinese gods fashioned of root and Japanese domestic wares on a fourteen-foot-long French country walnut sideboard, plus a Giacometti-like African totemic figure, coveys of majolica, and fantasy tables of silver with palm trees and ostriches, one topped by a sailor's valentine





The heart of the house, the Rosses' bedroom. *Opposite:* The bed is the most important treasure. "We found it in Canada, it's Tunisian Victorian." *Above:* A trio of superb Biedermeier pieces. On the chest at right, two black figures from the Rosses' extensive collection. The walls, covered in pale lilac Tricia Guild fabric, are a scrapbook of Victoriana from Denmark, Sicily, France, England, America.

production, their loving life, their collections, and the unique structure that houses it all in Los Angeles.

In the years I have known him Herbert has always had, as they say in the trade, an eye. The first time I visited him, years and years ago, in a Manhattan apartment, he showed me a multilayered cabinet containing serried ranks of curious replicas of antique seals, probably early nineteenth century. I also noted several pieces of furniture that were not only blond and beautiful but also individual, almost to the point of eccentricity. "I *am* attracted to the eccentric," Herbert says today. "The bizarre. I don't like conventional English or 'Fine French Furniture.' I dislike gilded furniture. I like Italian, Austrian, Swedish, Russian. I prefer Biedermeier. I like burl because of eccentric textures."

"I like kitsch," Nora says. "It tickles my funny bone. . . . Kitsch is something that's not an heirloom. . . . When we met [over 35 years ago], Herbie hated almost everything I had and made me sell it."

The Rosses have been married 27 years. Their marriage is nourished by a profound respect for each other's foibles, a deep and tender passion, and Niagaras of laughter. She laughs him into this and he laughs her out of that and before the mutual merriment languishes they have a new collection, even a new house—their most wonderful house, the house that Nora loves best and maybe Herbie doesn't, but then again, Nora laughs, "Of course, Herbert does."

"Why do you love this house best?" I asked Nora.

"Dear," she said in her most matter-of-fact voice, "it's so very, very, very comfortable. We wanted a loft in California, in Los Angeles. . . ." And that is what West Coast architect Peter Choate gave them on what one of the most knowledgeable local G.L.'s (Great Ladies) says is the "most beautiful street in Los Angeles." That is, the Rosses got the essence of a loft: its amplitude, flexibility, freedom, flow. Its possibilities of infinite, interior change. Its potential for theatrical effects. In short, they got a stage with dressing rooms and domestic offices (bedrooms, kitchens, pantries, library, guest suites, bathrooms) offstage.

There is something Jugendstil about the utterly unrevealing, white-white street face of this seeming one-story, modest-for-Hollywood house. Not a clue. The doors open . . . a vast room, a shimmering, shining splendor . . . the highly *(Text continued on page 266)*




Irish houses & castles
Rembrandt



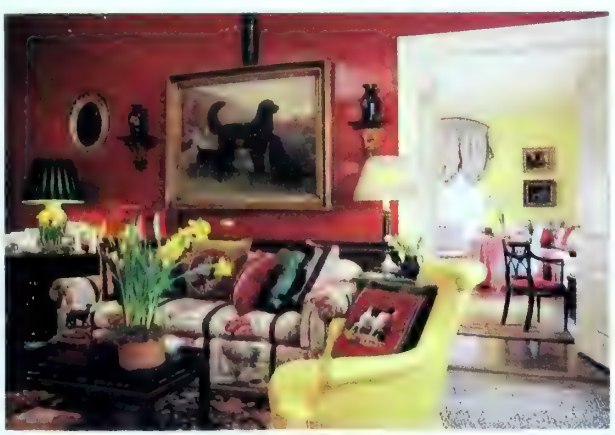
A COMFORTABLE AFFINITY

Keith Irvine draws on the decorating kinship between England and the American South

BY CHRISTOPHER HEMPHILL PHOTOGRAPHS BY KAREN RADKAI



A superb 18th-century English needlepoint rug—with no two flowers alike—anchors the living room, *above* and *preceding pages,* and answers the Lee Jofa chintz on the sofa and love seats. In the library, *opposite* and *below,* Irvine picked out the cornice in "dull duck's-egg blue and gold." Kip views hang next to a good Adamesque pine mantel. John Beringer Associates were the architects.



If lately you have wearied of the "English country house look"—as a phrase, at least—you have company. Keith Irvine, often described as one of the style's chief practitioners, feels the same way. "This fantasy that's been perpetrated on the American public," he says, "is a ghastly sea of ruffles. Anyone who knows the reality of real English country houses knows that they have no comfort at all."

Anyone who knows Irvine, however, will expect him to contradict himself in the next breath, as indeed he does. Scottish-born, English-bred, and for almost thirty years American-based, he goes on to describe his spiritual Valhalla as "late Regency drifting on through William IV and into the reign of the young Victoria." "The high point in the comfort of the home," he adds, "was reached about 1840, which was also the high point of the British Empire. They really did think that God was an Englishman. And I think the smart women who were around then realized that if they created atmospheres that men were comfortable in, they did very well out of it themselves."

This is a complex man, one who has a painting of himself dressed as Mary Queen of Scots in the country house he shares with his wife and daughters and one whose love for the British royal family is matched only by his passion for old Hollywood movies. Although he usually does eschew ruffles, there is a marked element of fantasy in his work—not to mention romantic pastiche. Free of the anti-Americanism that is endemic to so many Englishmen, he sees a deep affinity between English mores and those of the American South. He often works with Southerners—among them, Sam Blount, his associate on the voluptuously comfortable New York apartment you see here. Southern, too, are its owners.



A Granny Smith apple served the painter as a guide for the glazed walls of the dining room, which set off part of an extensive collection of Napoli ware. Purposely unrestored painted Hepplewhite chairs alternate with slipper chairs at a rare round William IV extension table. The clock on the corner of table, c. 1720, bearing oriental figures and symbols, was found by the owner at Leeding



Irvine and Blount "faux-tented" the master bedroom, *above* and *opposite,* in wallpaper from Colefax & Fowler, which also supplied the custom-colored carpet under the needlepoint rug. The sofa and curtain chintz comes from Lee Jofa. *Below:* The owners reserve a small adjacent sitting room for themselves alone. The man of the house found the striking Japanese prints that hang next to the 18th-century Venetian mirror.

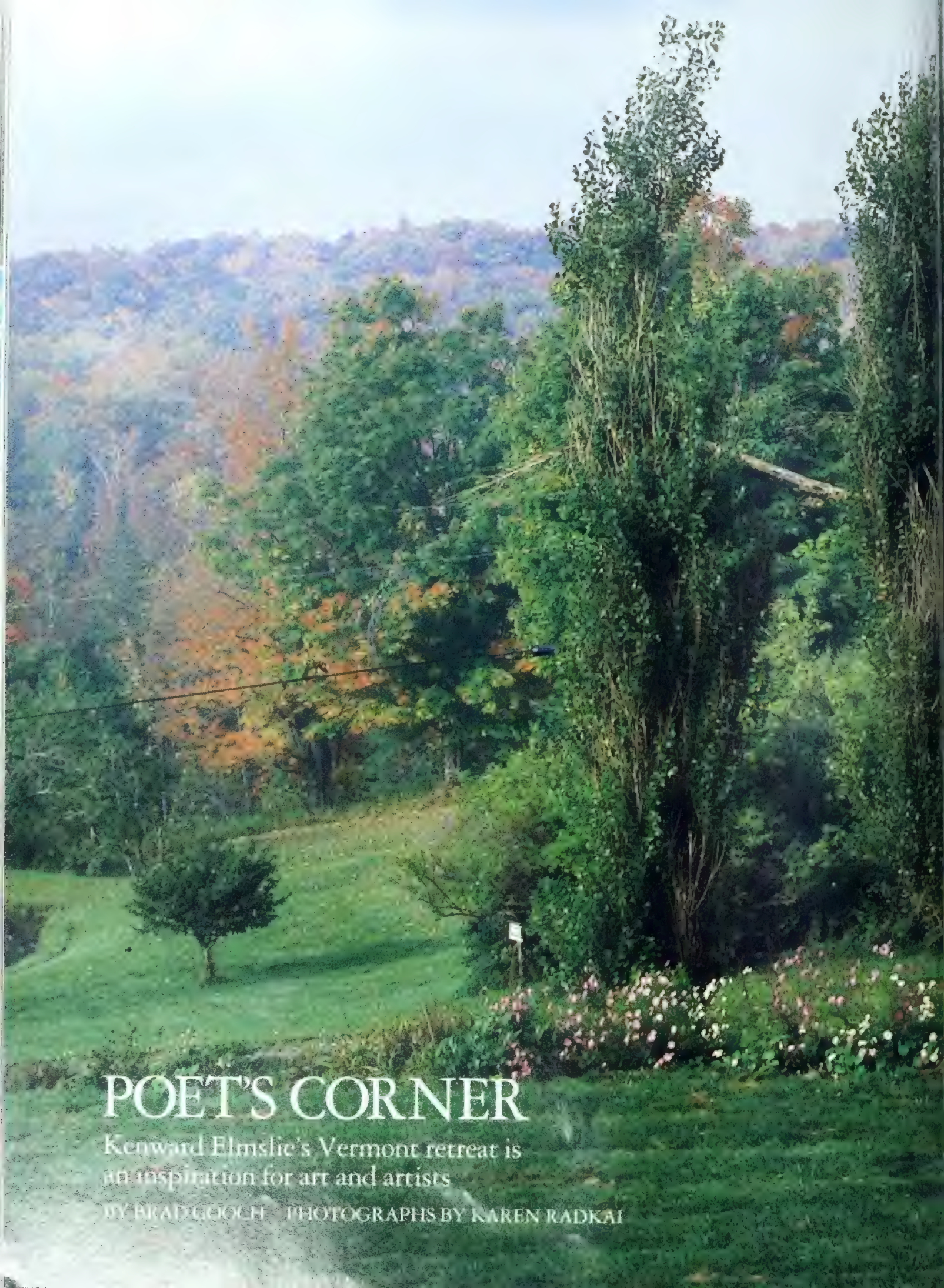


Youngish, with three growing children, they were childhood sweethearts in Birmingham, Alabama. She, an exceptionally pretty woman with a background in art history, has a passion for the decorative arts; he, a corporate panjandrum, has come to share some of his wife's interests and tastes. "We know a lot of people who are into major glitz," he drawls. "But we're trying to *de*-glitz." An adept of the European and Southern cult of poetical dereliction, his wife has mastered its subtler distinctions. She has learned, for instance, that hairline cracks add value to antique porcelain, while chips do not. Still she treasures the chipped porcelain she bought in her early auction-going days. "I was too timid then to examine it thoroughly," she says, "but now I look at it and it teaches me something. It brings back a certain point in my life. I see my evolution through the acquisitions I've made. And my first dog painting is still one of my favorites."

To be sure, some of the elements she has assembled here are not unexpected. Her nineteenth-century dog paintings, Napoli ware, and needlepoint pillows all enjoy conspicuous vogues just now, falling as they do within the canons of—the phrase is unavoidable—the English country house look. Her emotional involvement with her collection, however, gives it individuality; the authenticity of the "look" is assured by the fact that her decorator apprenticed at its very fountainhead—the London offices of Colefax & Fowler in the 1950s. Irvine typically prefers the contributions to that firm of the Virginia-born Nancy Lancaster, but he has vivid impressions of her partner John Fowler, who taught him to appreciate architecture.

"Like many English *(Text continued on page 250)*





POET'S CORNER

Kenward Elmslie's Vermont retreat is an inspiration for art and artists

BY BRAD GOOCH PHOTOGRAPHS BY KAREN RADKAI



An 1830s farmhouse and an office in a converted cowshed are Poet's Corner headquarters on Elmslie's two hundred acres



Vermonters make quilts the way they tell stories: in discreet patches that add up. When finished, they have a homey-looking blanket displaying a pattern as complicated as a circuitry board, in colors as brilliant as the pastels of turning leaves that attract so many "leaf peepers" to the state each fall.

Kenward Elmslie has been working on his own Vermont life quilt for almost 35 years. The noted New York poet, librettist, performer, small-press publisher, and grandson of big-press publisher Joseph Pulitzer first journeyed north in the early 1950s to get away to it all. He found 200 acres and a convertible 1850s farmhouse and proved himself quickly to the locals of Calais (pronounced "callous" in Yankee dialect) as more than just a summer person. Inviting lots of friends up to share the Vermont vistas during his six-month stints, he stitched together his New York and Vermont lives. As most of these guests were and still are artists, the quilt has become dense and eccentric. Poet's Corner—the name of the house is a play on the nearby Maple Corners—surfaces serendipitously in the creations of some of America's finest poets, musicians, and painters.

A visit to the secluded house at the top of Elmslie Road is indeed inspiring. Although Elmslie still feels himself more of a city person than a country one ("When I first came up here, I was in kindergarten as far as differentiating plants, leaves, and seasonal shifts; now I'm in about the third grade"), his eye for odd bits of Americana is keen. A postcard rack in the sitting room is filled each summer with personalized rectangles picturing a technicolor Grand Canyon or a yellow-brick courthouse somewhere in Idaho. On the windowsills, a collection of cobalt blue bottles refracts outside light into a beautiful blue murk. A pure-white cat, Lola (named for Lola Montez, the subject of one of Elmslie's musical plays), is usually curled on a round hooked rug.

Elmslie works most of the day in the converted cow shed that houses the books of poetry published by his Z Press, including a slim volume by Richard Thomas (the actor's hobby is poetry). Visitors can watch Elmslie through the windowpanes (reflecting a lilac sky) as he bustles about or types at a black IBM Selectric as if it were a spinet. Ken Tisa, a painter who usually finds inspiration in exotic Caribbean garb, claims to have been mesmerized during his stay at the pondside cabin by a family of beavers building a dam. Jean Boulte, a Brazilian photographer, has spent long hours wandering about the lush Tibetan-scale rocks and rills and tumbling hills snapping color-soaked panoramas.



Characteristically Elmslie's laid-back Bauhaus community is the result of a friendship. While a gawky undergrad at Harvard, he was stagestruck by seeing a performance of *Beggar's Holiday,* an Americanized *Threepenny Opera,* with music by Duke Ellington and book and lyrics by John Latouche. Elmslie resolved to be a lyricist. Years later he met his musical/opera muse, and he and Latouche became fast friends. At the time, Latouche was sharing a house with Gore Vidal in Rhinebeck, New York, but was yearning to go more rural, to balance a New York life that was, as Elmslie describes it, "wild and full of disparate elements and incredible pace."

Latouche was friendly with Helvetia Perkins, who kept a house in East Montpelier, Vermont. She was among those to whom the idiosyncratic Jane Bowles had dedicated her brilliant novel, *Two Serious Ladies.* Perkins, whom Elmslie describes as a small, vibrant woman with bangs and a snub nose—"a little Pekinese"—was an aurora borealis for many prominent artists and musicians, including the composers Virgil Thomson and Aaron Copland, who often came up to visit. So Latouche and Elmslie, birds of a feather, decided to wing it to Vermont in search of their own place.

Perkins introduced the two to her close friend Mrs. Louise Andrews Kent, a local celebrity whom she had met at a pie-judging contest. Mrs. Kent wrote literary cookbooks using the Vermont-lady persona of Mrs. Appleyard and introduced her recipes with such tasty morsels as, "Mrs. Appleyard's salon is her kitchen, for she is one of those wise cooks who understand that such things as hot blueberry muffins can be food for the soul." Mrs. Kent's daughter was in real estate at the time, and she led the two men to the farmhouse near Calais, which they snapped up, no questions asked. Then, explains Elmslie, "Mrs. Kent, almost in a feudal way, bequeathed to us her helper, Ralph Weeks." Weeks had plenty of experience working on Mrs. Kent's house, as well as on her miniature rooms. (These were Proustian adventures, replicas of rooms from Mrs. Kent's past, including a Bar Harbor conservatory replete with rugs, sconces, armchairs, and an autumn diorama of falling leaves glimpsed through French doors.)

Renovating Elmslie and Latouche's old farmhouse, which had been the site of a functioning farm until the 1940s and briefly the summer home to a Harvard professor, proved to be a challenge. Weeks installed plenty of windows, including upstairs dormers, a black marble fireplace, and a patio to cover the scars left by the removal of a series of barns attached to the house in a line—like the rooms of a New York railroad flat. The new bathroom was so large by Vermont standards that when Elmslie and Latouche were away curious neighbors took secret guided tours. Weeks also designed a shady grape arbor, dug and shaped two ponds, and, as a final touch, dabbed leftover paint onto the wet floor in the kitchen. Says Elmslie, "It's a Vermont tradition to use up this paint in a joyful way to brighten up a winter's day."

Helvetia Perkins, as a present, created a green Mexican-style door, since immortalized by James Schuyler in his poem "The Green Door": "Ralph and Harold hammer/somewhere beyond a green baize door. Even/the door has its story." Elsie Weeks, Ralph's wife, stitched quilt curtains from patches ordered from *Women's Household* magazine. And Mrs. Kent contributed a painting rendered on silk, a piece of traditional New England craftwork executed in loving memory of her grandmother.

Tragically, five years later, John Latouche died at the house of a heart attack, only months after the triumphant premier of his and Douglas Moore's American opera *Ballad of Baby Doe.* For a spell, Elmslie went to the house less often. When he did, he usually visited with his close friend Ruth Yorck, and they would translate Leopardi and medieval German lyrics together. Yorck, divorced from a Prussian count, was a German émigré known in the old country for her leading roles in the films of F. W. Murnau and for her stories and essays in European feuilletons. Elmslie describes her as a "veteran vanguardist" who was friendly with Ernst Toller, Jean Cocteau, Marlene Dietrich, and Kokoschka and whose own plays were admired and produced by Ellen Stewart at New York's experimental La Mama theater. A photograph of Yorck, nestling close to the international chanteuse Josephine Baker, now hangs next to the upright piano where Elmslie composed "Lovewise," his 1959 jukebox hit sung by Nat King Cole, Mabel Mercer, and Nancy Wilson.

During the seventies, Elmslie resumed his schedule of half a year in Vermont, half in New York, and Poet's



Lola the cat, *opposite,* poises on a New England secretary between blue bottles that grew to be a collection with presents from friends. *Above left:* Adirondack chairs are set near a man-made tarn. *Right:* Stairwell wallpaper was found by John Latouche in the fifties.



Corner reentered its Russian country-house phase, with visitors staying for weeks or months at a time. Most prominent was the "Tulsa Gang," consisting of the artist Joe Brainard, the poet Ron Padgett, and his wife, Pat. The two young men had launched a precocious poetry magazine while still high-school students confined to the spacious Southwest, publishing the likes of E. E. Cummings and Allen Ginsberg. Elmslie remembers summer days when Brainard and Padgett would be knocking off sendups of Nancy comics while James Schuyler lounged upstairs in the guest-room bed penciling poems on a tablet and Elmslie and composer Claibe Richardson belted out songs in the piano room below for their Broadway musical *The Grass Harp,* based on Truman Capote's short story. At the time so many poets were asking directions to the house that local gossip had it up for sale.

During the seventies, Elmslie discovered the joys of gardening and spent many afternoons covering his vegetables with hay to keep the heat from drying out the soil. Meanwhile, Brainard had begun to work at top speed on a show of cutouts for the Fischbach Gallery. After watching Elmslie huffing and puffing to glean dead grass from the fields, he was inspired to marvelous "mulchworks"—cutting strands of paper and then layering and arranging all these weeds into dense patterns of collage. A few years later, Elmslie was working on a libretto for *The Seagull,* an opera with music by Thomas Pasatieri based on the Chekhov play. When asked to design a cover for the libretto, Brainard chose to sketch the Poet's Corner pond. The Chekhov house, too, rests by a pond.

One poet whose lyrics have certainly benefited from his visits to Poet's Corner is James Schuyler, perhaps America's greatest nature poet. If Elmslie is a third-grader at sightings, Schuyler is at least in the twelfth grade. This terse Wordsworth has an unclouded eye for natural minutiae, especially in his prosey poem "A Vermont Diary," in which he discusses the "brassy tarnished" green of lilac leaves, the "pale Paris green as moonlight" of a lichen-covered tree trunk, and the "dark thick green/to face the winter, laid in layers on/the spruce and balsam or in foxtail/bursts of pine." Schuyler's favorite season in Vermont is November, when "The clouds are tinted/gray and violet and shred/the blue in other blues./Each weed as you walk/becomes a rarity."

When Elmslie reminisces about his writer and painter guests over the years, their names always come in twos or threes, often linked with what they've taken away with them or left behind. Although Schuyler and frequent visitor John Ashbery didn't write their zany collaborative novel *A Nest of Ninnies* on the premises, Elmslie is pleased to note that Calais does pop up (he also saw that the book was reprinted by Z Press). Alex Katz, who used to stop by on his way to his Maine home, made the drawing of Lola Montez (bearing a strong likeness to his wife, Ada) that hangs over the living-room settee and doubles as the *Lola* album cover. For the past four years, Elmslie's guest in the cabin has been Donna Dennis, an artist known for her haunting models of abandoned subway stations and empty cabins. Elmslie and Dennis have been busy fabricating fantasy bars for their book of drawings and tales *26 Bars,* to be published by Z Press next year.

To catch on to the spirit at Poet's Corner, you just have to notice how Elmslie's garden grows. It, too, is a quilt—a living quilt of raised beds of beans (bush beans, pole beans, shell beans), green lettuces (bib, celtuce, cress, arugula), vegetables (spaghetti squash), and mint (lemon mint, pineapple mint, apple mint, spearmint). Sometimes Elmslie chooses his seeds with a special guest in mind. Since Donna Dennis is an expert Indian and Moroccan cook, Elmslie has been planting lots of coriander lately. He keeps zucchini growing as an ingredient for the delicious zucchini bread that Mrs. Weeks concocts in her oven: the chartreuse shade of the loaf matches her favorite pants suit.

From the back door, *opposite,* one sees the pondside cabin, where artist Donna Dennis has lived and worked for parts of four summers. *Above left:* A winter landscape by primitive painter Bessie Drennan hangs over a black marble mantel designed by John Latouche and built in Barre, a capital of stonecutting. *Below:* Z Press, Elmslie's graceful small press, is housed in this office.



But mostly Elmslie goes by the names of the seeds and so has inadvertently planted the wittiest vegetable patch in America. One of his favorite lettuces these days is Avon Defiance. "I planted it because I pictured a lettuce shaking itself at Shakespeare," he hoots, taking a swig of apple cider from a Queen Victoria Diamond Jubilee cup. "I think it's just a poet's reaction." □



IN THE KING'S SERVICE

The extraordinary eighteenth-century French gold and silver table appointments commissioned for the Portuguese court

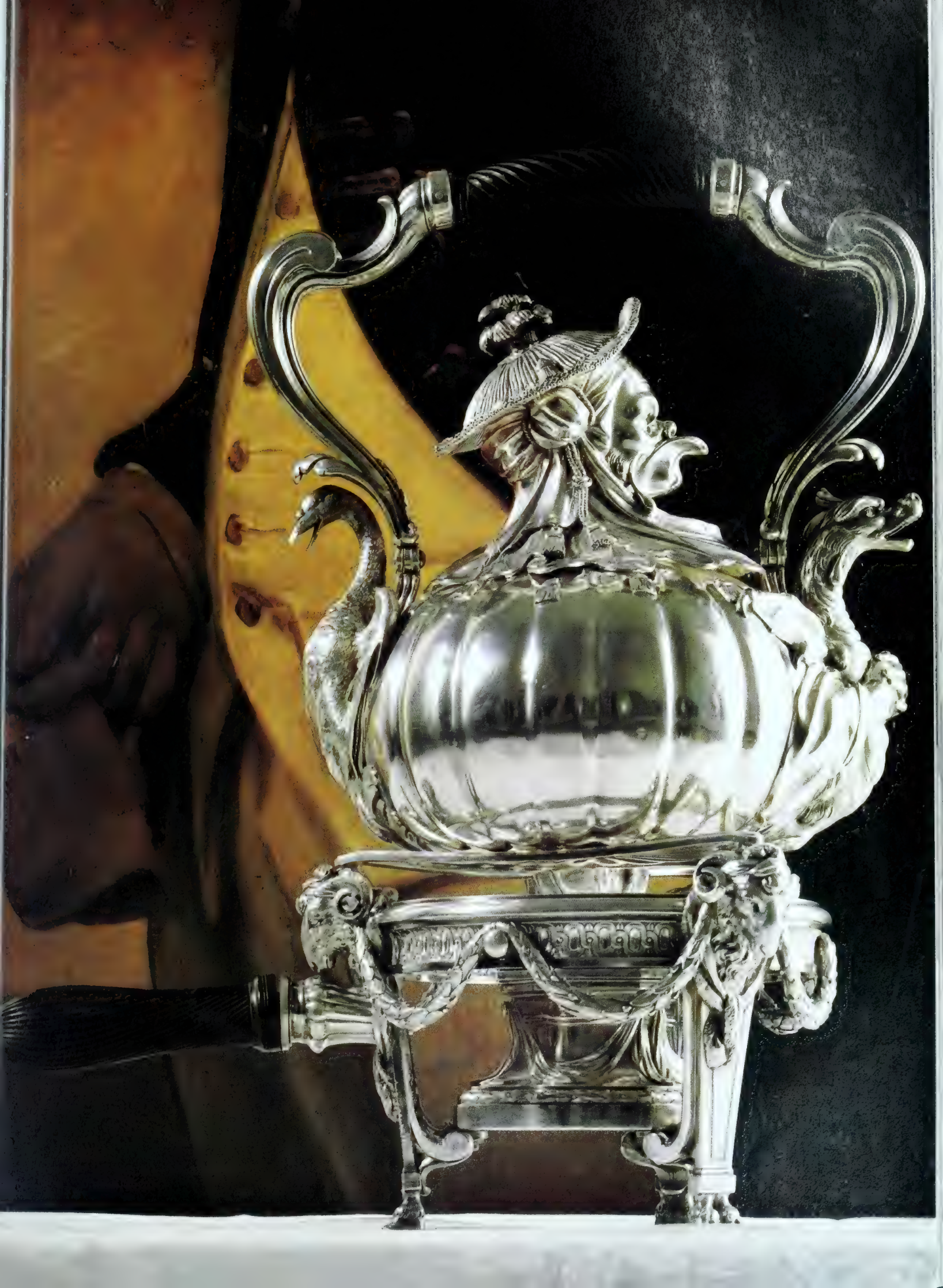
BY LEONOR D'OREY AND MICHAEL TEAGUE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY OBERTO GILI



A rice ladle, *above,* made by Jacques Ballin in 1757 is decorated with a finely worked pattern of graduated scallop shells. *Opposite:* One of a pair of ornate chinoiserie kettles with a grimacing mandarin holding a dragon-head spout on one end and with a spread-winged swan on the other, created by François-Thomas Germain in 1756.

In matters of taste and fashion nearly every European monarch in the eighteenth century took his or her cue from the French court at Versailles. King João V of Portugal (1706–1759) was no exception. Enriched by the vast gold and diamond deposits of Brazil ("my milch cow," as one of his predecessors fondly called the Portuguese possession), the king and his court began to indulge in an extravagant and opulent life-style previously unseen in Portugal. Enormous importance was attached to the outward display of wealth, to the presentation of things, and to theatrical effect. It was as if the importance of the moment had to be enhanced by going to the limits of exuberance and decorative profusion with no expense spared to achieve the desired effect. Everything reflected the needs of an exhibitionistic society, and the art of receiving and entertaining allowed one to show off the enormous amount of objects required to do things in style.

Nowhere was this more apparent than in the all-engrossing pastime of eating, which seems to have occupied an inordinate amount of time with the upper classes of the period. The French kings reputedly spent an average





...gilt figurines, nearly sixteen inches high, designed by ... table. Eight couples are dressed in national costumes, ... of China, Poland, and Hungary.





of eight hours a day at table, most of it in public. Other European monarchs followed suit. Engravings of court entertainments at Versailles set the style for elaborate table settings and decorations, which were often laid out by architects on the same principles that applied to formal garden design. French menus and recipes were dutifully copied, and manuals of etiquette guided the uninitiated through the intricacies of ceremony, *placement* ("how to receive ambassadors"), table manners ("no more than three fingers in a dish at one time"), and so forth.

Above all, it was French gold- and silversmiths who were the most sought after by the European courts and aristocracy, with the exception perhaps of the English, to embellish their tables with the required degree of style and panache. Although the Portuguese king preferred Italy as the source for his ecclesiastical silver, for "*vaisselles de table, déjeuners,* and *service de toilette,*" as one contemporary commentator noted, "we only trust Parisian taste."

The Portuguese court had been accustomed to order most of its silver from England, but in 1724, João V made his last purchase in London—a solid-silver tub weighing



The covered dishes for the royal collection came in a variety of shapes and sizes. These three, with their elaborate pattern of overlapping leaves and blossoms and handles of twisted flower stems, were made by F.-T. Germain in 1757.

an astonishing 207 kilos—and switched his patronage to Paris, where he placed a large order with master craftsman Thomas Germain, "sculptor and goldsmith to the king," who had his apartments and workshop in the Louvre. Over a period of the next fifty years Thomas Germain and his son François-Thomas, who succeeded him, produced an estimated three thousand pieces of gold and silverware for the sovereigns and nobility of Portugal.

The nucleus of this unique collection, supplemented by the work of other well-known French silversmiths of the period such as Auguste, Ballin, Cousinet, Durand, Joubert, and Lenhendrick, can still be seen in Lisbon today. Most of the pieces (and all of those shown here) are housed in the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga with the remainder kept in the old royal palace of Ajuda. In terms of quality, quantity, and variety it is undoubtedly the finest single collection of eighteenth-century French silver in existence today.

Details of how this great service was assembled can be gleaned from the correspondence between the Portuguese court and the king's personal commissioner in Paris, who was often as important as the political



Ewer and dish with the Portuguese royal coat of arms, *above,* were made by François-Thomas Germain in 1757. The tricorne-shaped dish was designed to mark the four corners of the center display of a table setting. *Opposite:* American Indian salt cellar figurine designed by F.-T. Germain to commemorate the Portuguese discoveries in the New World.

ambassador and probably far busier. He was in effect the purchasing agent for the crown in the French capital. Several other European monarchs had such agents, and there seems to have been a certain amount of industrial espionage involved with the job. Elizabeth of Russia's representative, on seeing the scale and grandeur of the service being prepared for the king of Portugal, advised his sovereign to get something similar of her own, which she did. Curiously enough, several pieces of the service that Germain made for the Russian court, including two magnificent silver-gilt tureens almost identical in design to a pair in the Portuguese service except for the different royal coat of arms, have also ended up in a Lisbon museum, that of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.

The French king was apparently not above checking out what the Germain workshops were sending to his fellow sovereigns. On one occasion the Portuguese commissioner reported with obvious amazement to Lisbon that the "great *service de toilette* is going to Versailles tomorrow because the King wishes to see it, something which has never happened before to any of the work being sent out of France." *(Text continued on page 256)*





...and Lion made by
T. F. Kandler in 17...
Opposite: An exquisite
worked salt cellar only
two inches high, from a
solid-gold luncheon
service designed by L. C.
Germain for King Jose...
in 1760



THE INDOMITABLE ELISABETH DRAPER

An establishment designer with a vocabulary all her own

BY DODIE KAZANJIAN PHOTOGRAPHS BY KAREN RADKAI



Mrs. Draper's skillful use of color brightens her "Classical goldy yellow" sitting room. Next to a Knole sofa, *opposite,* covered in Scalamandré fabric left from curtains for a landmark house, is an églomisé panel by Pierre Dutel. *Above:* A Brunschwig frisé covers the bergère in the foreground. The rug is by Stark.

Elisabeth Carrington Low Draper has never forgotten her first assignment, which was to make a lady who had "reached a certain age" appear graceful. The challenge was heightened by the fact that the client was not only an Astor but married to a British peer. "Lady Ribblesdale lived at 383 Park Avenue," Mrs. Draper remembers. "When I arrived, she was sitting in her drawing room at the edge of her sofa. She said, 'I can't get up as readily as I used to. Can you help me?' " It came to Mrs. Draper that the solution was to raise the sofa, by adding an inch to the legs, and make the seat cushion firmer. From this she learned a useful lesson: "You sit *in,* and enjoy, a delicious plump sofa, but you sit *on,* and rise gracefully from, a firm settee."

Elisabeth Draper, at age 86, is in as much demand today as when she started in 1929. She has just returned from Paris, where she finished designing a flat for an





Elisabeth Draper, *right,* calls her 18th-century terra-cotta busts representing the four seasons the "daughters I never had." They sit on wall brackets when not on the library table, *below,* which also serves as a dining table, *opposite.* The chandelier is 18th-century Murano glass, and the Directoire cabinet that stores porcelain is framed by early-18th-century Dutch firescreens. The window shades of white linen damask with fringe are copied from a design in the Metropolitan's American Wing. Sliding suede panels and chicken-wire mesh cover the bookcase wall at the end of the room.





international client, and is already involved with plans for a well-known New York City banker's house in East Hampton. She is sitting *on,* not *in,* a Louis XV fauteuil in her sunny Park Avenue drawing room. She is a trim five feet nine inches tall and is elegant in a Pauline Trigère dress, which she has redesigned and is wearing for the first time. The dress is neither a purple nor a lavender. It is somewhere in between. A green stone choker is around her neck. Elisabeth Draper is a master at mixing colors.

"I brought a sample of this color back from Burlington House in London many, many years ago," she says enthusiastically about her newly painted living-room walls. "I was considering it for a dining room in Paris which I'm doing, but when I had a leak in this room, I thought, Why not try it here first? And it just worked. It's a pinky, goldy yellow. It glows a little bit. It's what I call Classical gold. It's a gold that used to be a lemon gold. It's juicy, it's not dreary. It's up. It's gooey and Winterthurish. It's a resilient lively color and it ignites."

The color is like Elisabeth Draper, who has a lively and very definite philosophy for which she has devised her own verbal *(Text continued on page 271)*







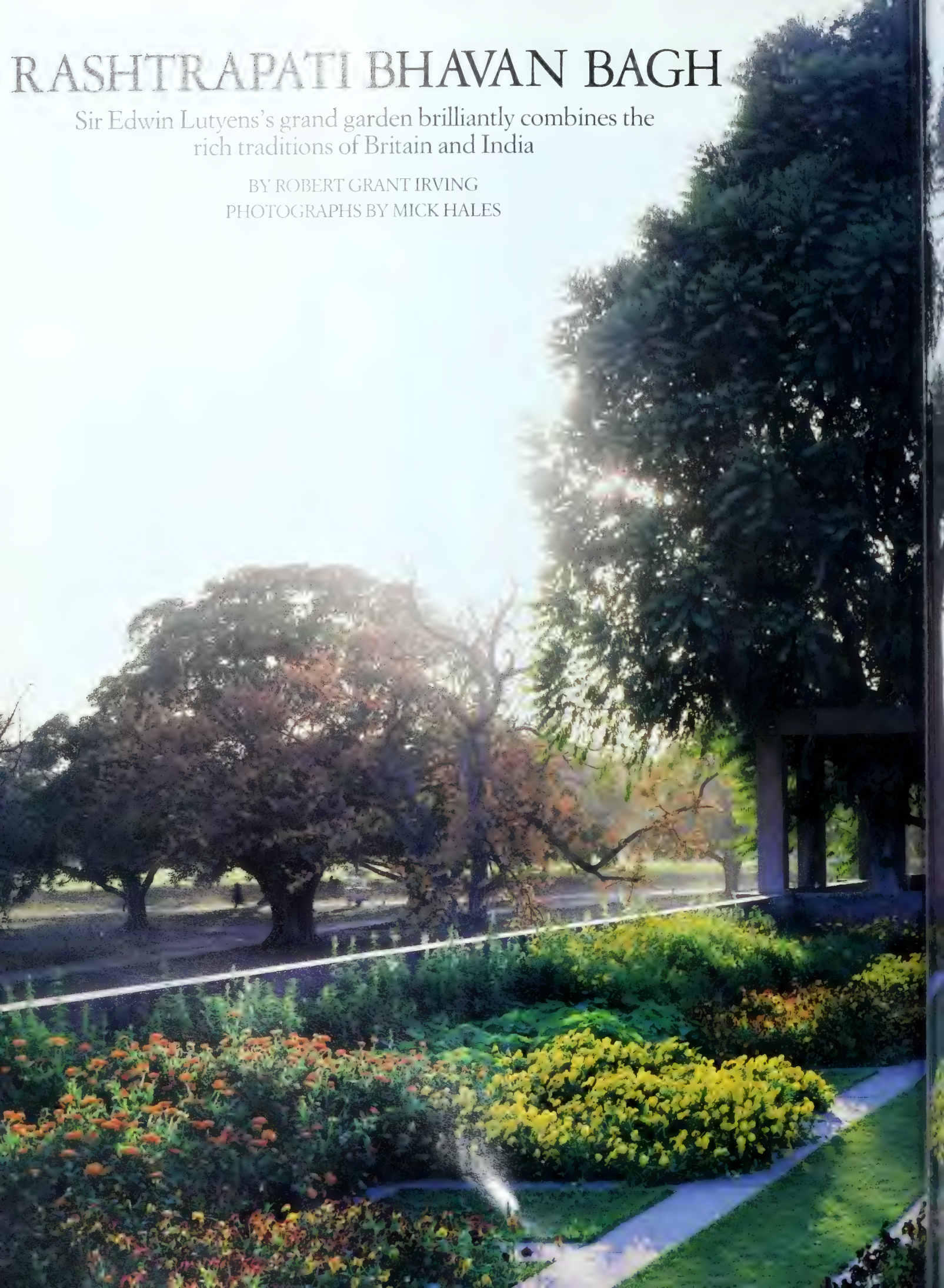
In Mrs. Draper's Empire-green study, *left,* seating is provided by an armchair with an Eaglesham linen seat, an iron daybed in billiard-table felt, and a high-back chair—one of those she created for Yale's Corporation Room—covered in a Clarence House chintz. Gold damask skirt from Decorator's Walk. The watercolor by Jack Braden is one of many renderings of places she has lived. *Above:* To house an antique English clock face, Mrs. Draper cut a hole into a lyre she found in a junk shop. *Below:* Mrs. Draper painted the ceiling beams pale blue to strengthen the architecture of her bedroom and designed the bed with crystal drops dangling from parasol finials. The pink cotton skirt is striped with white cotton open-braiding at eighteen-inch intervals, and the candelabra are from Nesle.



RASHTRAPATI BHAVAN BAGH

Sir Edwin Lutyens's grand garden brilliantly combines the rich traditions of Britain and India

BY ROBERT GRANT IRVING
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICK HALES





Tall trees now tower romantically over a gazebo at the western edge of the Mughal Garden, but originally they were clipped to form green roofs and walls within the sandstone frames of the side pavilions.



Thousands of fragrant roses perfumed the gentle breezes that whispered down the half-finished corridors of Viceroy's House at New Delhi on Christmas Day in 1928. A desert of building debris only a year before, the site was now a breathtaking carpet of rippling color which appreciative Indian visitors promptly dubbed "God's Own Heaven." Lord Irwin, the first British viceroy to savor its beauty, pronounced the garden to be "a paradise."

The celebrated architect Sir Edwin Landseer Lutyens devised the opulent formal garden to complement his 340-room viceregal palace, now residence of the president of India and known as Rashtrapati Bhavan. The fourfold plot, or cosmic cross plan, that Lutyens first sketched figured not only in Hebrew versions of Eden but also in Muslim concepts of paradise as well as in Hindu and Buddhist traditions. Lutyens explicitly intended the garden to recall the heritage of the Great Mughals, imperial overlords of India who envisioned paradise as a blissful scene of heavenly verdure. Lutyens grasped every opportunity to view this Islamic legacy.

Decorative use of water was the particular aspect of Indian architecture which most captivated Lutyens. After all, it was he, in contemporary judgment, who "more than any other man" had promoted a renaissance in British water gardening. On his first visit to India in 1912 he had arranged to have the fountains play in the Red Fort at Delhi, in order to see and hear the water effects in the carved cascades. The following year he visited Shah Jahan's Shalimar Gardens at Lahore, but it was "delicious" effects at the Taj that particularly excited him: ". . . clear western skies, gorgeous colors, dark glossy trees, & the pools & water channels full, so we got full reflections."

Lord Hardinge's sympathetic support for a garden inspired by indigenous design reflected the viceroy's vision of the Indian Empire as a partnership of Briton and Asian. After fifteen years' service in the East, he understood the political and symbolic importance of incorporating native arts in the fabric of the new imperial

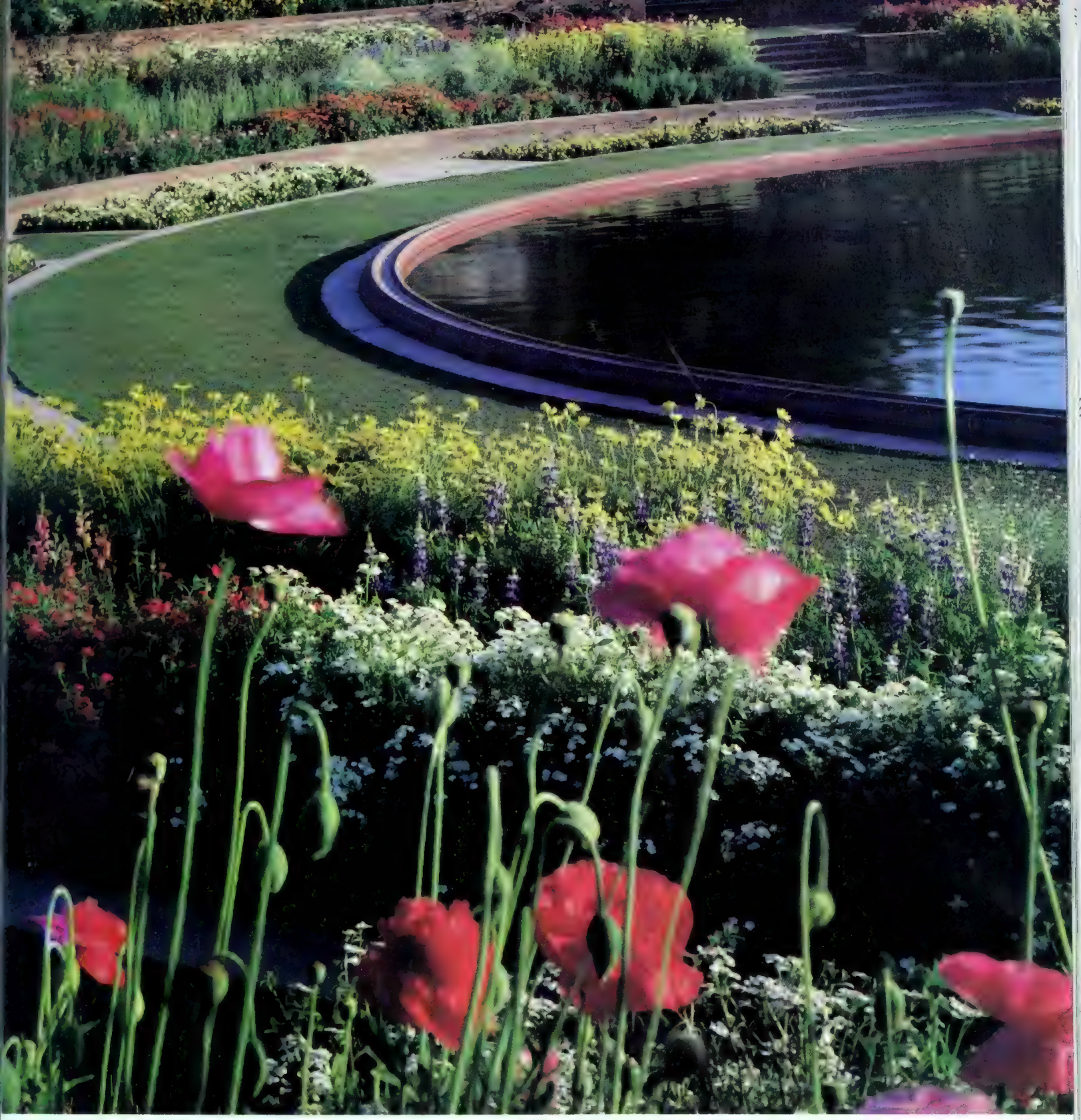
Westward view from the palace displays the complexity and clarity of the three linked gardens in Lutyens's design, *right*. From the pivotal greensward in the Mughal Garden, center left in the photograph, the walled Pergola Garden, dividing the clay and grass tennis courts, leads to the walled Round Pool Garden. Beyond is the Delhi Ridge, barren until British afforestation. *Above:* Looking east, the domes of Rashtrapati Bhavan rise above the vine-covered walls of the Round Pool Garden.





Delhi he had helped found. Before his departure from India in 1916, Hardinge took measures to ensure that a generous supply of water would be pumped to the granite ridge behind the viceregal palace, sufficient for the proposed garden and for the fountains and tanks of the principal processional route, King's Way.

Not until 1925 did the Indian government give final approval to Lutyens's entire fourteen-acre plan for a viceroy's garden. By then the cost had grown to more than eleven times the original budget. But transforming Delhi's arid wasteland was an expensive task, for it meant contending with stony soil, scanty rainfall, temperatures ranging from 22 to 115 degrees Fahrenheit, and innumerable pests. Porcupines, hares, rats, and white ants wreaked especial havoc. With persistence, new species of flora were successfully introduced, including laburnum, tamarind,



casuarina, albizzia, and various acacias. Over five hundred varieties of Indian trees and shrubs were grown for the avenues and gardens of New Delhi in the Safdar Jang nursery, where the collection of roses rivaled the best in England. Eventually an imposing green park from the Jumna River to Viceroy's House gladdened the eye, and the Delhi desert began to blossom like the Biblical rose.

At Viceroy's House, Lutyens softened and brightened, indeed Anglicized, the bold geometry of Mughal water gardens with *(Text continued on page 274)*

Typically English flowers—poppies, calendulas, phlox, snapdragons, larkspur, coreopsis, salvia, dahlias—planted in broad strokes of color fill the tiers of the Round Pool Garden. The pool is planted with lotus, which bloom in late summer and are important in India both symbolically and gastronomically.

An intricate pattern of small but crisp changes of level—raised curbs and walkways, shallow steps down to water channels—gives vitality to the essentially flat Mughal Garden, *above. Below:* Rows of tall flanking cypresses emphasize the four axial paths, geometrically patterned in buff and rhubarb red sandstone, that lead to the central greensward.



Except for roses, all the flowers in the Mughal Garden, *above,* are annuals, descendants of the originals planted by the British and grown from seed collected every year by the gardeners. *Below:* The strong modular frame in meticulous stonework designed by Lutyens has allowed the gardeners to make requisite planting rotations without altering the basic symmetry.







The circle is a recurring motif in the garden's design: sandstone circles suggesting lotus leaves form tiered fountains at channel crossings and in pools beside the palace; a wall of sandstone hoops screens the tennis courts; and trees, *Mimusops Elengi*, trimmed to hemispherical domes, dot the parterres.



MAVERICK MASTER

The architecture of Frank Gehry is neither Modern nor Postmodern but defines itself with originality and power

BY MARTIN FILLER



Frank Gehry *opposite*, in a portrait by Robert Mapplethorpe. The rear of Gehry's Ronson House of 1981 in Venice, California, *this page*, is perched like a lifeguard station above the beach. The owner, a screenwriter, was once a lifeguard.


HENRY BOWLES

Frank Gehry is America's most obscure great architect. When he is recognized at all outside his profession or the art world (in both of which he enjoys tremendous critical prestige), it is inevitably for his most controversial buildings. Jarring, seemingly half-built (or half-demolished) structures—especially the best known, Gehry's own house of 1978 in Santa Monica—they appear to most people the perfect antithesis of what architecture is supposed to be: exposing rather than sheltering, perturbing rather than calming, and consisting of obviously cheap materials rather than the best the owner's money can buy.

But there is much more to the man Philip Johnson has praised as an "original architect, of which we have very, very few." The entire range of the 57-year-old Gehry's career—which includes what he calls his "matter-of-fact developer work," his offbeat furniture designs, his widely publicized fish lamps, and his recent series of buildings for educational and cultural institutions—is the focus of his first museum retrospective, "The Architecture of Frank Gehry," curated by Mildred Friedman and now at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis. It is unlikely to make Gehry a household name, but it will no doubt help to dispel what he has termed "this backlash that this is not architecture, that this is self-indulgence, which is disturbing to me."



GRANT MUDFORD

Rebecca's, *above,* a new restaurant in Venice, shows Gehry at his most uninhibited. Beneath piñata-like painted-tin crocodile lamps, tabletops and panels of onyx seem funky, not pompous.

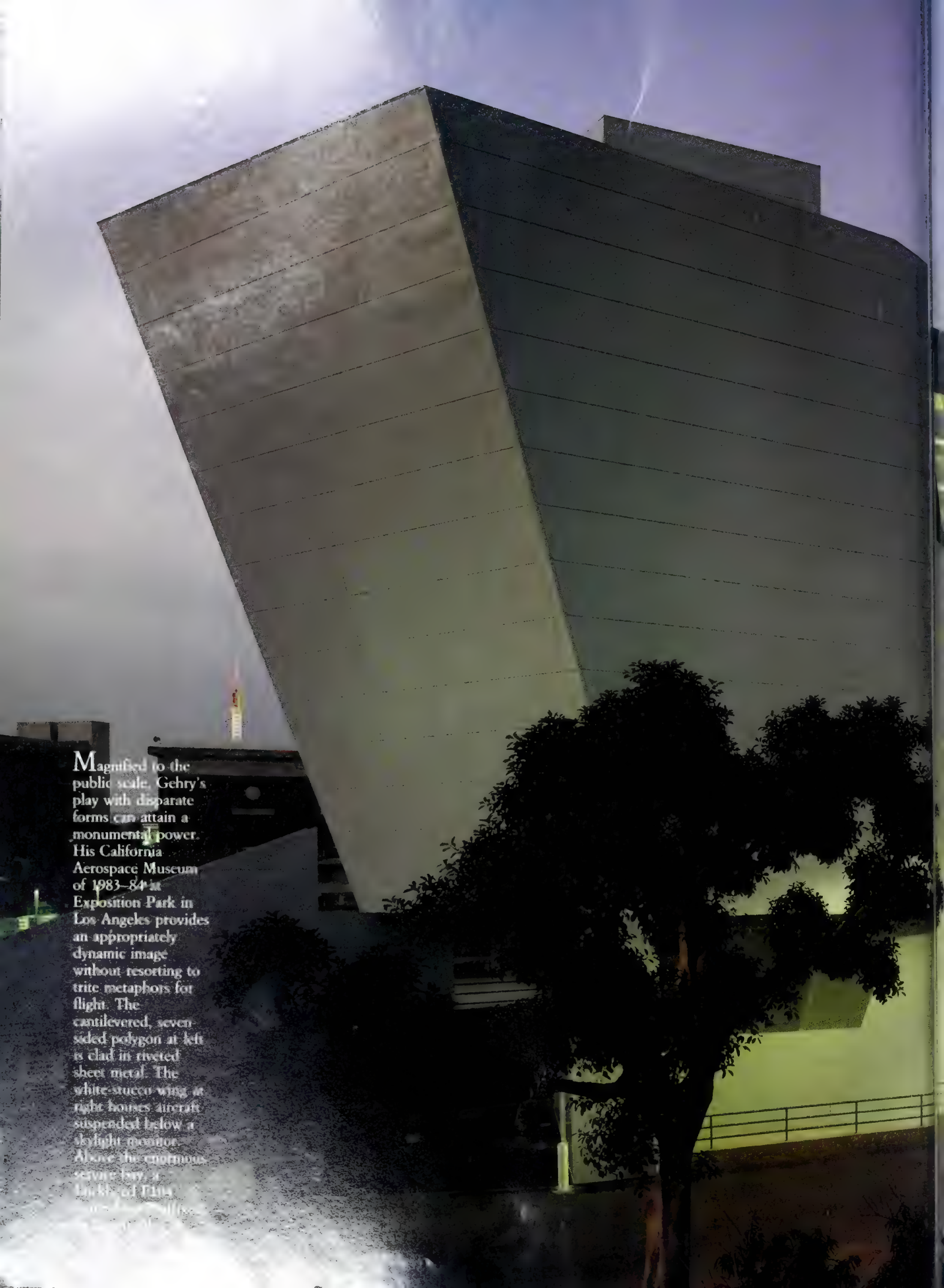
Gehry is unquestionably an artistic maverick, but he is an unusually reflective one, subject to constant self-doubt and self-criticism of a sort not generally associated with the creators of such contentious works. Gehry's analytical dialogue with himself is a mass of contradictions. At a time when many American architects are eager to be perceived as artists, Gehry shies away from that designation, claiming, "I feel in a way that that's used like a dismissal. I want to say I'm an architect. My intention is to make architecture." Yet his collaborations with such artist friends as Claes Oldenburg and Richard Serra have been among the most conspicuously successful in recent years; he has also designed a stage set for the choreographer Lucinda Childs, and his museum installations for the work of other artists have been acclaimed for their unusual sensitivity.

Although Gehry is an expert draftsman (he once did commercial renderings for developers like John Portman), he has such an inherent distrust of the seductive allure of architectural drawings that he does his own in an intentionally crude style. (Gehry notes of one exhibition that "the gallery had a hard time selling my drawings.") His corrugated-cardboard furniture of 1969–73 was created in the same larky spirit as the other domestic novelties of the late 1960s, but its sturdy construction ensured that enough of it would survive to become prized among the best designs of the period, displayed in museums and sought by connoisseurs.

At the heart of all these oppositions—the artist who doesn't want to be called one, the gifted renderer who draws ugly, the designer who plays it fast and loose and winds up making history—lies Gehry's unsentimental view of the contemporary world. "We're in a culture made up of fast food and advertising and throwaways and running for airplanes and catching cabs—frenetic," Gehry has noted. "So I think there's a possibility that

The house as kit-of-parts, a recurrent Gehry theme, is given very different treatment in two L.A.-area residences. *Opposite:* The Norton house in Venice draws on the same range of cheap materials and casual colors as the other modest beachfront structures it is wedged between. *Below:* Much larger and more formal, the Sirmai-Peterson house in Thousand Oaks, to be finished later this year, responds specifically to its rural hillside site.

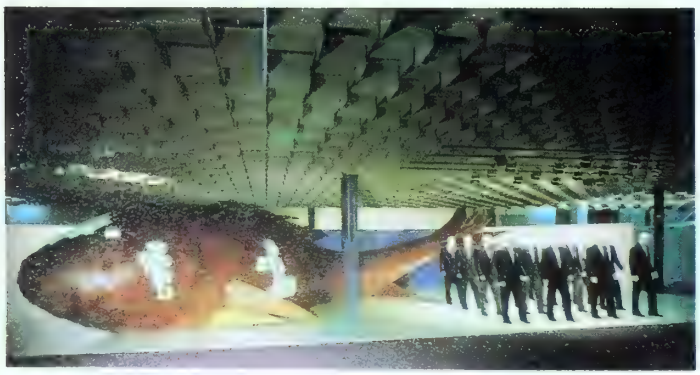




Magnified to the public scale, Gehry's play with disparate forms can attain a monumental power. His California Aerospace Museum of 1983–84 at Exposition Park in Los Angeles provides an appropriately dynamic image without resorting to trite metaphors for flight. The cantilevered, seven-sided polygon at left is clad in riveted sheet metal. The white-stucco wing at right houses aircraft suspended below a skylight monitor. Above the enormous service bay, a







Gehry's fascination with fish goes back to his childhood, when his grandmother would keep live carp in her bathtub before making them into gefilte fish. *Top:* A school of Gehry's Formica ColorCore fish (and snake) lamps at Metro Pictures, New York, 1984–85. *Above:* Exhibition structure for the 1986 Pitti Uomo menswear collections, Florence. *Opposite below:* Model of the Winton guest house, Wayzata, Minnesota, shows the architect's new, calmer approach toward multiple masses.

those ideas about buildings are more expressive of our culture than something finished is."

Gehry is a leader among the first-generation rebels against the International Style, the institutional Modernism that dominated the architectural scene during the first two decades of his career. But unlike his contemporaries Robert Venturi and Charles Moore, whose line of attack has called for a return to historical sources and popular building traditions, Gehry has dared to create designs that draw more on his unconscious than on a common cultural fund of familiar, comfortable images. If it is reassurance that you seek in architecture, you must look elsewhere.

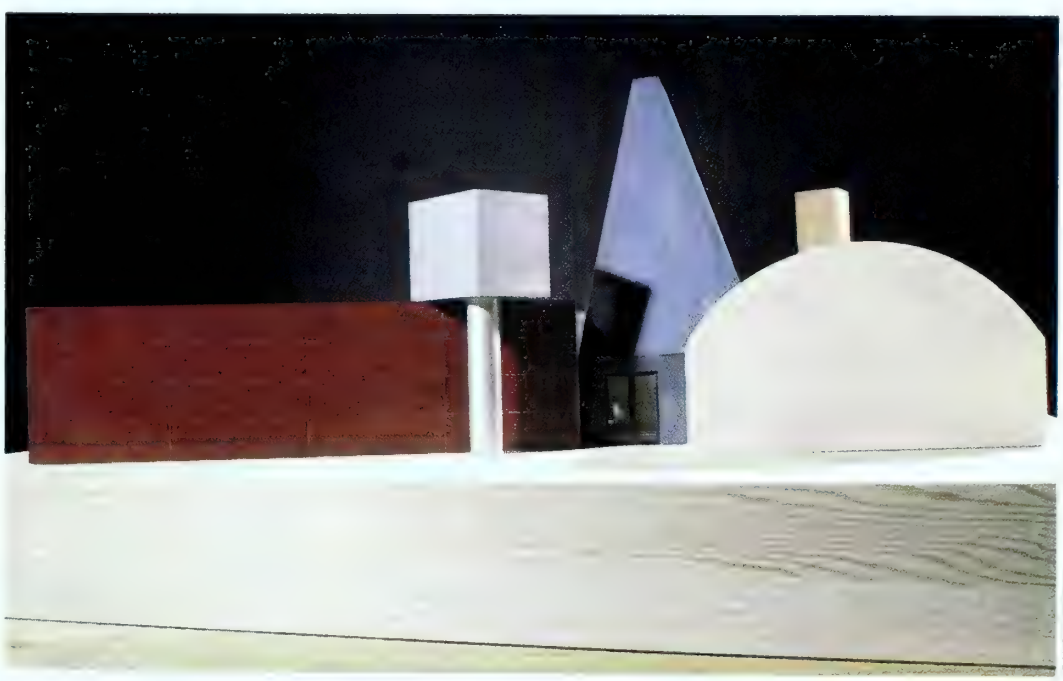
Frank Gehry was born Frank Goldberg in 1929 in Toronto. He changed his name when he was in his twenties and has subsequently come to regret it, a fact revealed for the first time in Thomas Hines's biographical essay in the Walker Art Center catalogue. His working-class background did not include college or a profession as an inevitable birthright, though there seems to have been a family

D. JAMES DEE

gene for architecture: as a boy Frank played with his grandmother at building model towns from scraps retrieved from his father's hardware store, and, using very similar methods, Gehry's younger sister Doreen Nelson has become an educator with a special interest in introducing school-age children to concepts of architecture and city planning.

Frank's parents immigrated to Los Angeles in search of a better life when he was eighteen, and after a stint as a truck driver he eventually enrolled at the University of

(Text continued on page 252)



GRANT MUDFORD













Gehry's strong sculptural instinct for place-making is particularly effective in the amorphous urban context of Los Angeles. His new campus for the Loyola Law School, 1981–84, creates a communal focus in a drab low-rise neighborhood.

The freestanding columns of the moot-court building, *top left and right, center left and right,* and *opposite,* symbolize the continuity of the Classical legal tradition. The Catholic school's chapel, *bottom left and right,* is plywood faced with glass.

GRANT MUDFORD







From the marble-paved foyer, *below,* the first room seen is the library, *opposite,* whose design began with an Aubusson rug from Stark. Victorian chairs in a Brunschwig chintz are copies of a period piece acquired by the designers at auction. Balancing the English Regency recamier in the symmetrical room is a grand piano. *Left:* In the new glazed bay, which enlarges the family sitting room, a sofa in Cowtan & Tout chintz.

ENGAGING ECCENTRICITY

Pauline Feldman and William Diamond add the right spice to a bland suburban house

BY ELAINE GREENE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY FRANÇOIS HALARD

There are no visual surprises to be found on the curving, leafy streets of the small seaside town just outside New York; the houses are pleasant but unexciting. Many of the interiors are equally bland, but not this deliciously rosy, quirky place recently transformed by decorating partners Pauline Feldman and William Diamond with their associate Anthony Baratta. Feldman and Diamond have given enough suburban lookalikes the uniqueness of a villa or manoir or dower house—in their own cleanly focused 1980s way—to consider this sort of upgrading one of their specialties.

William Diamond describes the original house as possessing "all the fifties clichés, like casement and jalousie windows, a built-in bar with built-in stools, knotty-pine paneling, no moldings anywhere. But it also had huge rooms with high ceilings and wonderful possibilities." The clients gave their decorators a free hand and their complete trust—ideal working conditions for creativity and success, not to mention lasting affection, which is evident on both sides.

The decorators began with the structure. "Decoration can't do the whole job," Pauline Feldman says. "Featureless architecture is too great a burden." Accordingly, they pushed out the front wall to improve the proportions of the foyer and library, consolidated several small spaces into one vast master bath, made a too-large, too-long master bedroom smaller and squarer, gave an interior dining room a broad opening to the daylight, added a room-wide glass bay to the family sitting room, and moved numerous interior doorways to *(Text continued on page 264)*





The library's scale is so large that two six-place dining tables serve as end tables for the sofa. The bookcases, occupying facing walls, were inspired by Billy Baldwin, the window swags by Mario Praz's book *Interior Decoration*. Mohair goffered velvet on four French chairs and red damask on upholsterer's-model recamier from Clarence House.





What was originally a separate jalousie-windowed sun-room, *above,* has become a traditionally glazed extension of the once landlocked dining room, *below*. Columns, treillage, wainscoting, a Victorian dining table seating 24, and Charles R. Gracie wallpaper are among the elements the decorators used to suggest a Newport summer cottage. Sun-room chairs are Burmese. Dining candlesticks from James II Galleries.





The family sitting room, *above* and *below*, the customary informal gathering place, contains three sofas. The decorators moved the fireplace to center it properly and furnished the facing wall with a joined pair of 1920s screens depicting the hemispheres. The unusual folding chair is a 19th-century Raj piece. Ottoman wears plaid blanketing; ordinary fabrics were too small in scale. Paintings from Hirschl & Adler.







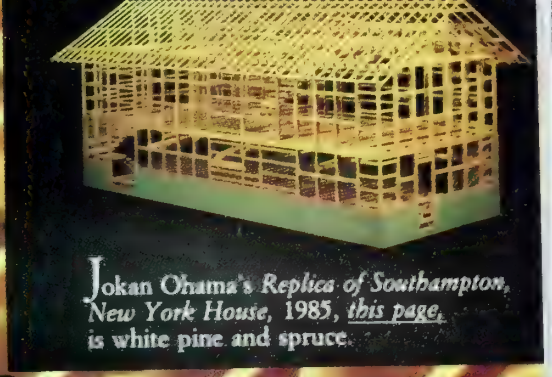


The master suite consists of a bedroom, *above,* study, *opposite below,* and bathroom, *opposite above,* the latter an imperial space combining two original bathrooms and adjoining closets. The floor is marble, the wallpaper a 1930s find. Tray ceiling was an inspiration ("What's up here anyway?") that struck while Sheetrock was being put on the walls. Botanical print in vanity detail, *right,* from Florian Papp, vase from Bardith, James II silver. Bedroom wallpaper is actually 1930s borders against gray paper; rug from Stark; damask at windows by Lee Jofa; velvet on sofa by Scalamandré. Study mantel displays argon lamps from client's childhood home; Brunschwig chair fabric.





Jon Brooks's *Styx Ladderback Chairs*, 1986, in maple, prisma color, and lacquer.

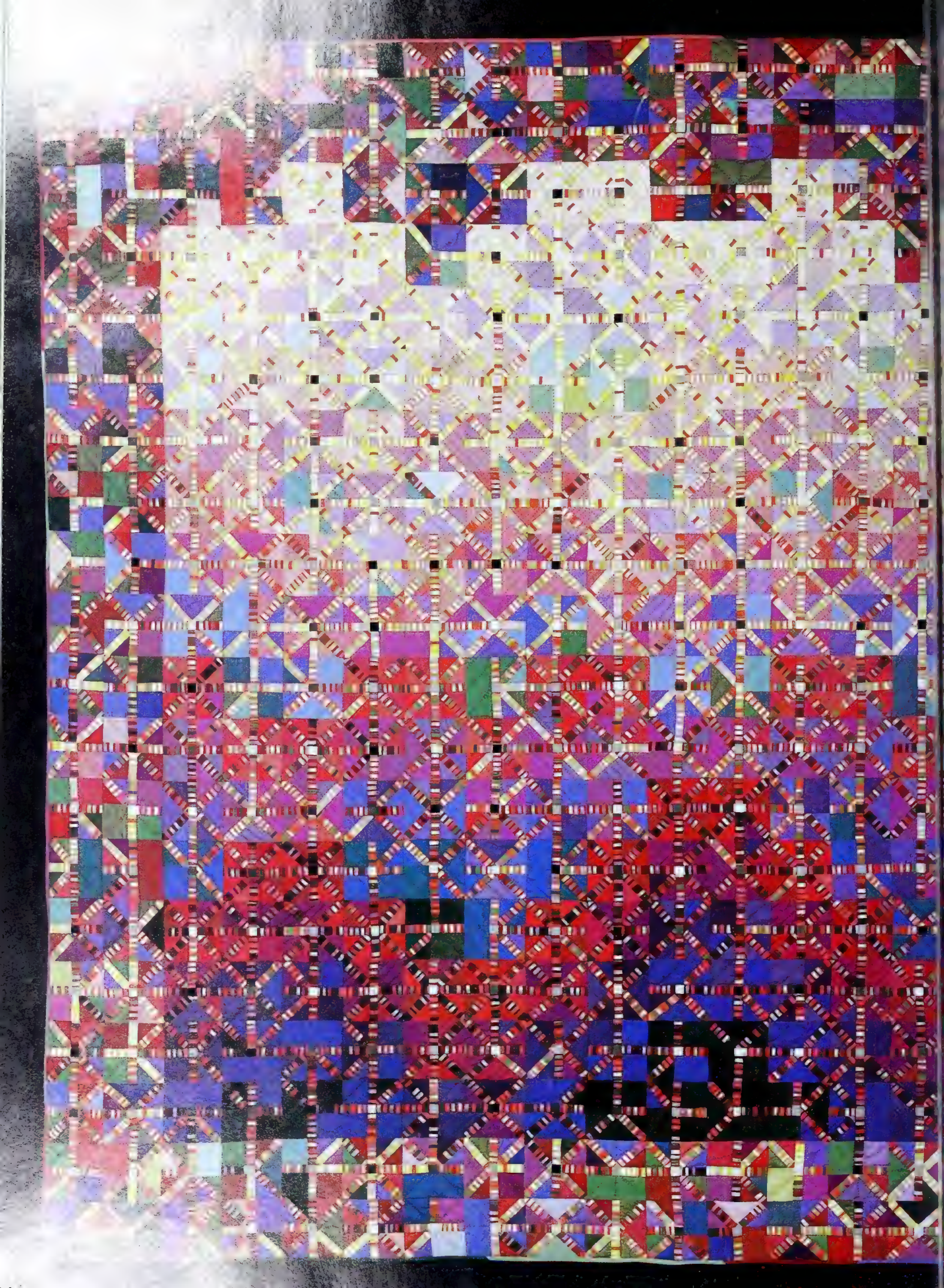


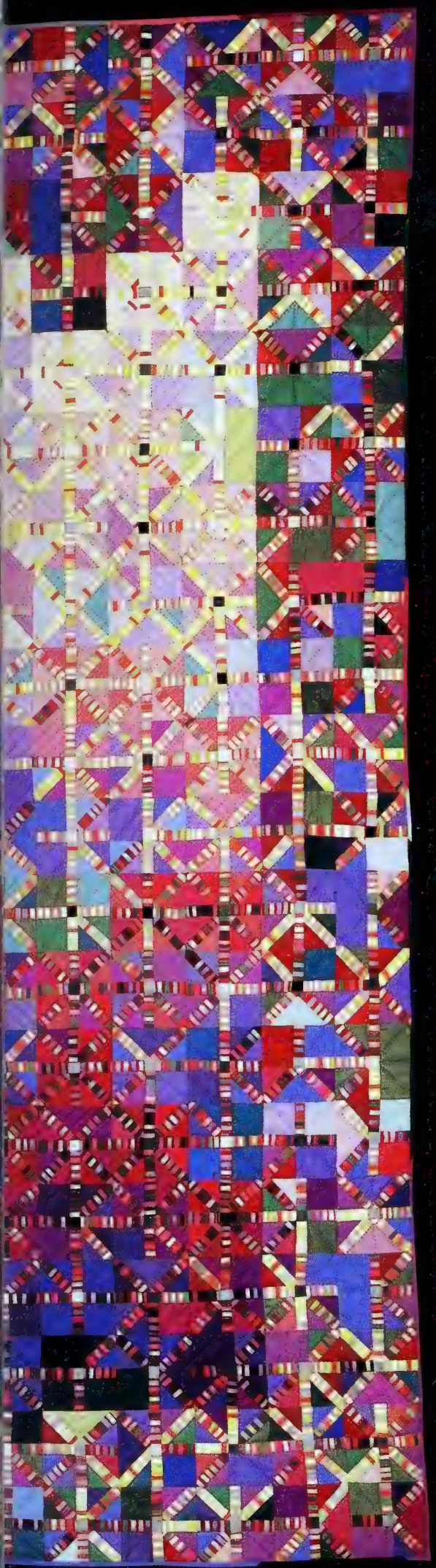
Jokan Ohama's *Replica of Southampton, New York House*, 1985, this page, is white pine and spruce.

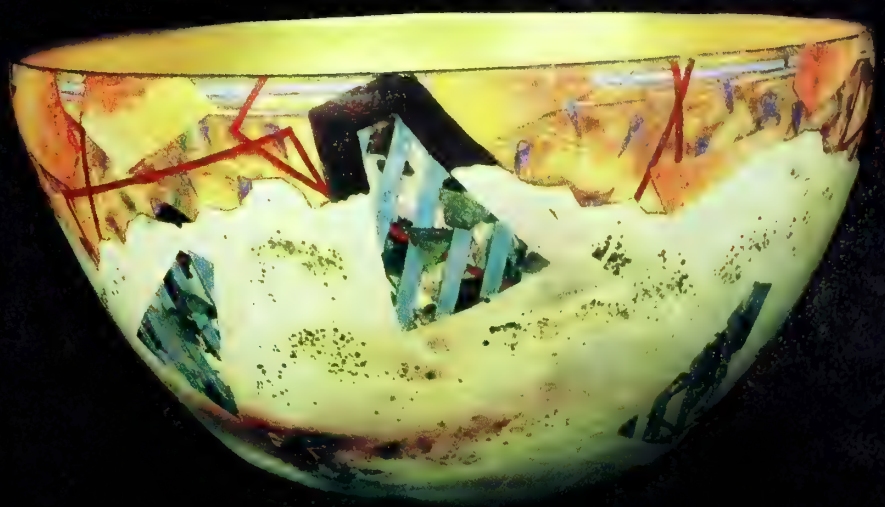
CRAFT COMEBACK

The American Craft Museum reopens in New York

BY EDWARD LEBOW PHOTOGRAPHS BY GEORGE ERML







Among those concerned with American crafts, Aileen Osborn Webb was no sentimentalist. Her money came in a purse lined with social concern, and her plan was simple: to help her rural New York neighbors market their handiworks during the Depression.

By 1940 her vision had moved beyond subsistence to encompass the formation of the Handcraft Cooperative League of America. The organization's small shop with a big name, America House, opened just a block and a half from the Museum of Modern Art. From there, Mrs. Webb could hear the Modern leaning on its horn for industrial design. Its yearly exhibitions of "Useful Objects of Design Under $10" showed the way to Bauhaus-inspired comfort, and, not coincidentally, to the end of handmade design. Elegant, modern, and factory-wrapped, these things were priced to sell. But they weren't for Mrs. Webb.

She stuck to the newest of the old, promoting the painstaking handiworks that modern industry was supposedly making obsolete. Her concern wasn't for endangered species, but for handcrafted beauty, which she found in simple objects made for practical use. She priced them on the rise. And in 1956 she *(Text continued on page 258)*

Pamela Studstill's *Quilt #53*, 1985, *left*, in cotton and textile paints. *Above:* Painted earthenware bowl with applied gold leaf, 1985, by Bennett Bean.



EMPIRE IN NEW JERSEY

How my wife lives with a Napoleana nut

BY CHRISTOPHER FORBES
PHOTOGRAPHS BY OBERTO GILI



From her expression when I confronted her with an over-life-size white marble bust of Napoleon III, I knew that my wife was patiently reminding herself, "He does not gamble, drink to excess, or keep a mistress . . ." My addiction for ephemera relating to France's last sovereign, though at times exasperating, is as vices go relatively benign. Astrid has become a collector's dream spouse. After ten years she is not only resigned but often enthusiastic about acquisitions: souvenirs of the Second Empire or my ongoing passion for *Flash* comics aside, in furniture and style we have found common ground.

My bachelor furniture purchases were almost exclusively First Empire (or would-be First Empire) pieces—the more ormolu caryatids and capitals, the better. Astrid's dowry included a splendid suite of Biedermeier furniture. Living with the same simple Neoclassic forms of Empire, but in lighter woods embellished with ebonized elements in lieu of ormolu, soon converted me to Biedermeier. The subtle execution of the curved swan's-head applewood arms on the drawing-room sofa triumphed over the robust chasing of their gilt-bronze counterparts embellishing the four corners of the marital sleigh bed. Not that switching to Biedermeier was to foreswear excess completely—the domed, alabaster-columned, ebony-inlaid drop-front desk, which was a fifth-anniversary present to Astrid, more than holds its own with the monumental mahogany cylinder desk that was my parental reward for graduating from college cum laude.

From a decorating point of view, our conversion to collecting fruitwood furniture also gave us a historical precedent for mixing Second Empire things with furniture that was fashionable decades before Louis Napoleon mounted the throne. After the collapse of the First Empire, his mother, Queen Hortense, eventually settled at Arenenberg, a relatively modest Swiss villa, which she furnished with simple *bois clair* pieces. The only allusion to the martial spirit of the court of Napoleon I was the striped papers hung to create the illusion of campaign tents in the principal reception rooms. During the Second Empire, when the house was enlarged, the original rooms were restored and the new rooms decorated in extravagant contemporary taste by the emperor's fashion-

A graduation present from Christopher Forbes's parents, the grand mahogany cylinder desk, *opposite,* displays a collection of Napoleon III busts purchased at auction. *Above:* The applewood sofa in the drawing room is prized for its finely carved swan's-head arms.



A vitrine coffee table in the living room contains small Napoleon III memorabilia, from livery buttons to a lock of hair. The painting over the sofa was done by Louis-Antoine-Leon Riesener, c. 1833. The 1825 Biedermeier drop-front desk with domed top and alabaster columns was a fifth-anniversary present from Christopher Forbes to his wife, Astrid. In front of it is an 1840s French piano stool.





The silk-covered walls and tented ceiling in the dining room, *above,* were hung by the Forbeses themselves. The imposing portrait of Napoleon III is flanked by an English Regency harp and a gilt-plaster equestrian statue of Napoleon I sculpted in 1844 by the comte d'Orsay. *Right:* The Prince Imperial dressed as a cadet in a nine-foot painting by Henri Campotosto, 1874, stands in the entrance hall.

able consort, the empress Eugénie. The mix of styles gives the villa not only character but warmth, and it gave us the courage to attempt a like ménage.

Our efforts were devoted to the carriage house and stables on my parents' property in New Jersey, a Federal-style complex that has only stuccoed exterior walls in common with Arenenberg. The "campaign tents" were copied in all details except color. The gray-and-white stripes trimmed with red favored by Queen Hortense were ruled out in favor of hues sympathetic with a beige, brown, and mustard Stark carpet purchased at PB-84, which we could not afford to replace.

Tenting the dining room in green moiré kept Astrid's sewing machine and my staple gun busy for the better part of a summer (our admiration for professional upholsterers soared). A portrait of Napoleon III by Hippolyte Flandrin and Eugène Montpelier and a gilt-plaster equestrian statue of Napoleon I made by the comte Alfred d'Orsay for Louis Napoleon in 1844 were among the [illegible] that helped to distract from the rather less-than-perfect alignment of material on walls and ceilings.

Later we moved into a Dutch Colonial–style *landhuis* built in 1930. It is a tribute to the versatility of Empire and Biedermeier furniture that they look equally well in the contrived rusticity of our would-be eighteenth-century manor as they did in the make-believe tents in the former stable. Astrid no longer asks the question that any collector finds irrelevant: "Where are you going to put it?" In both houses there has been a place for Henri Campotosto's portrait of the Prince Imperial (Napoleon III's only son), which with its frame is just shy of nine feet tall.

Coping with Napoleon III is by now almost a family tradition for Astrid. Dominating one wall in the drawing room is a charcoal portrait by Franz-Seraph von Lenbach of a maternal ancestor. Chancellor Prince Otto von Bismarck is the man who engineered Napoleon III's downfall and the fall of the Second Empire. Today portraits of both men hang harmoniously in rural New Jersey—albeit in separate rooms. □ *Produced by Nancy Richardson*



Near the doorknob at the center of the bedroom "bookcase" painted by G. H. Rothe are a Sèvres cup and saucer copied from a set made for Napoleon III. Above the door is a plaster cast of the Prince Imperial's foot taken at the age of six months; its companion hand and a biscuit-porcelain bust of the prince, by Carpeaux, are on a shelf at right.



The Forbeses' Empire bed once belonged to composer Richard Rodgers. Next to it is a Biedermeier chair that is considered rare because of the Neo-Gothic back on a square-front format. A Louis Philippe desk chair complements the mahogany cylinder desk, above which hangs a pastel sketch of Napoleon III by Hippolyte Flandrin.



ADAM'S GLORY

The rooms, furniture, and fittings of Kedleston Hall evolved from the minds of a cultivated patron and an architect-decorator of genius

BY JAMES LEES-MILNE PHOTOGRAPHS BY RICHARD BRYANT

Half of the curving stair, *above,* of the South Façade. *Right:* The great Marble Hall, designed after the atrium at Diocletian's Palace, leads to the Saloon. Twenty Corinthian columns of a red-veined local alabaster line the walls behind which are alcoves holding statues of gods and goddesses. Stuccowork on the ceiling and overmantels was done by Joseph Rose.







In the semidomed apse, *opposite,* of the dining room, Adam included in his plan curved sideboards for displaying silver; the large wine cistern is made of Sicilian jasper. *Above:* The Saloon is a rotunda with four Ionic doorways and four niches with diamond-coffered half domes. The central coffered lead dome rises to 62 feet; this view looks toward a palm mirror designed by Adam in the State Boudoir. Above the door is a painting of Classical ruins by William Hamilton flanked by mythological scenes by Biagio Rebecca. Adam designed the wall sconces as well as the chairs.



The first time I visited Kedleston was in May 1945. World War II had just ended. "Down the long drive there suddenly bursts upon one's vision the great house, best seen from the Adam bridge. It is very grand, very large and symmetrical," I wrote. In front of the forecourt, then overgrown with grass and nettles, rows of army huts had little suburban gardens in front of them, an incongruous spectacle. I was directed to the east pavilion, where the family was living, the west pavilion still occupied by the army. The great center block, previously full of troops, was now stacked with furniture under dust sheets. From the door handles, designed by Robert Adam for the Saloon, the soldiers had unscrewed and stolen the rosettes for souvenirs. "Whereas Lord Curzon," I went on, "thought he was pigging it with only thirty indoor servants, today the family have one woman for three hours each morning." All over the undulating park were unsightly poles and wires, something to do with radio location. I noted down that Adam's Bath House was falling to ruin. So was his lovely Boat House. "But then what can these unfortunate people do? Their's is a tragic predicament. This visit has made me sad. I am convinced that this wonderful house is a doomed anachronism."

Thus I wrote over forty years ago. Today the situation is not so desperate. The house, garden, and beautiful park will be saved provided two million pounds can be raised by the National Trust before the end of March 1987. This sum is essential for the purchase of the contents, most of which were made for the house. It was Lord Curzon's dearest wish that the National Trust should one day take Kedleston under its wing, and until his death in 1925 he was one of the trust's most ardent supporters and benefactors.

In view of the terrible expense of running a house and estate of Kedleston's size and importance and of crippling taxation, the famous Samuel Johnson's retort to James Boswell in 1777 reads ironically today. In that tiresome way he had of needling the great Doctor to make stupendous pronouncements which he could record, Boswell said, after a panegyric of the first Baron Scarsdale's extensive demesne, two-mile-long lake, enormous palace, and valuable contents, "One should think that the proprietor of all this *must* be happy." "Nay, Sir," answered Johnson, "all this excludes but one evil—poverty." Poverty, which to the eighteenth-century mind was totally irreconcilable with nobility!

George Nathaniel, first and only Marquess Curzon of Kedleston, was by far the most distinguished of Kedleston's owners to inherit in the direct male line from a Norman ancestor who acquired the place in 1135. Because the marquess had no son, Kedleston went on his death to nephews, one of whom, the third Viscount Scarsdale, lives there now.

As it happened, Lord Curzon did not inherit Kedles-

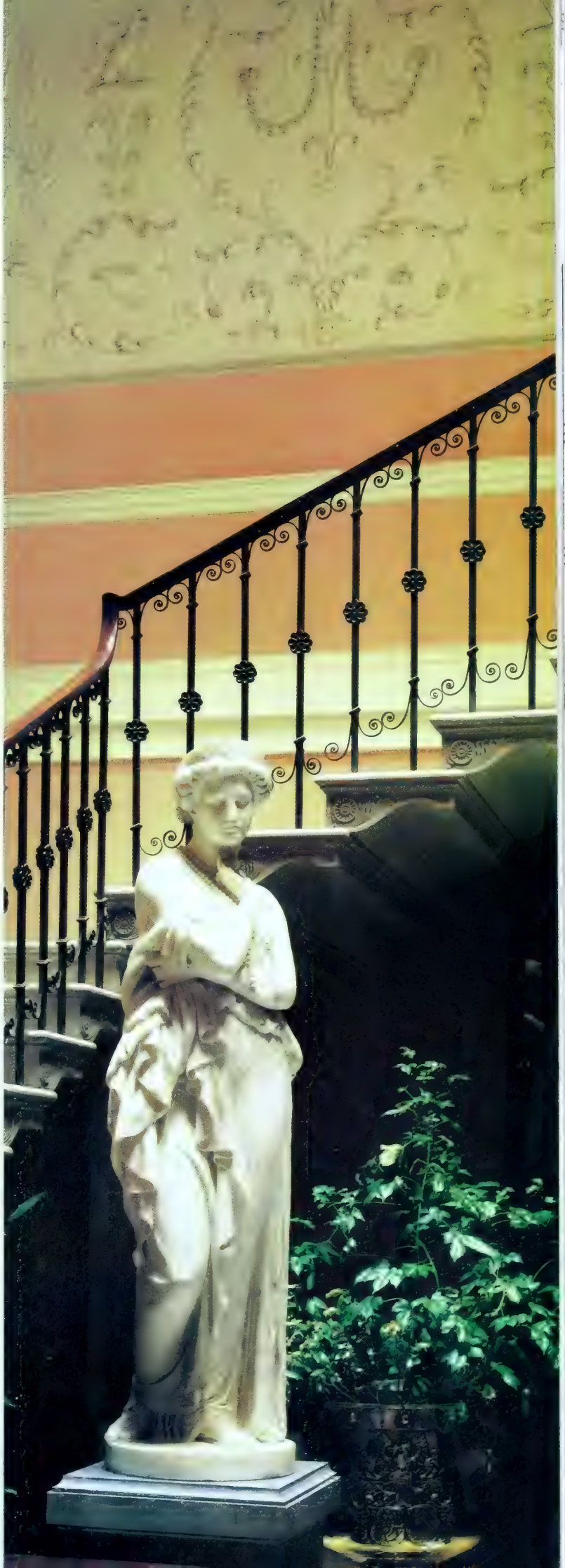
A detail, *left,* of the marble-and-onyx fireplace against the blue silk-damask walls in the State Boudoir. *Opposite:* A door in a corner of the Marble Hall leads to the Grand Staircase. The elegant three-flight stairway was unusual for its time both in being cantilevered and in its use of very thin treads.

In 1759 Nathaniel Scarsdale met Robert Adam and was captivated by the young man's Roman tastes, which coincided with his own

ton from his father until 1916. By that date he had been married to a beautiful American heiress, and had served as viceroy of India and Lord Privy Seal. He was yet to become one of England's great foreign secretaries, leader of the House of Lords, and to miss, to his bitter chagrin, the premiership. Nevertheless this man, who had previously rented several famous English country houses, left his mark on Kedleston, notably in the elegant wrought-iron screen and gates of the forecourt, and the monumental wine cooler and candelabra he had made out of the silver caskets presented to him in India.

Lord Curzon's love of Kedleston was almost mystical in spite of the misery of his childhood there. "I suppose no children well-born and well-placed," he wrote in afteryears of his siblings' experiences, "ever cried so much or so justly." Their governess was a sadistic tyrant. She terrorized and beat them mercilessly, tied them to chairs in uncomfortable positions for hours on end, and locked them in dark cupboards. On George Nathaniel's head she would place a conical cap and round his neck strips of paper bearing the words, written by himself, "liar, sneak, coward and lubber." In this guise the boy was made to walk, to his intense humiliation, through the village. She made him ask the butler to prepare a birch with which she thrashed him, having forced him to confess to sins he had never committed. His parents were wholly unaware of these atrocities, and when the governess left, she spoke of the Curzon children as models of every virtue, and even bequeathed what money she possessed to the eldest sister.

The first Baron Scarsdale (likewise Nathaniel), who created Kedleston Hall, was the marquess's great-great-grandfather. He was an archaeologist of imagination with great partiality to Roman splendor. In 1758 he pulled down the family's modest Queen Anne seat and set to work with his drawing board. First he swept away the village. Although ambitious, even he baulked at pulling down the medieval parish church. So as it stood on the site where he wanted his new house he built around it. Like a boa constrictor, the Neoclassical palace enfolds the old church within its tentacles. Lord Scarsdale commissioned a number of professional architects to draw accurate plans to his own specifications—Matthew Brettingham II, James ("Athenian") Stuart, James Paine, and Robert Adam. And the greatest of these was Adam. Although Brettingham got no further than determining the plan, a central block with curved corridors linked to four advanced pavilions, *(Text continued on page 248)*





The North Façade, *above*, mostly designed by James Paine. The fishing house to its right is by Adam. *Right*: The center of Adam's South Façade is a [illegible] inspired by The Arch of Constantine. [illegible] removed the village of [illegible] except for the [illegible] to the left.





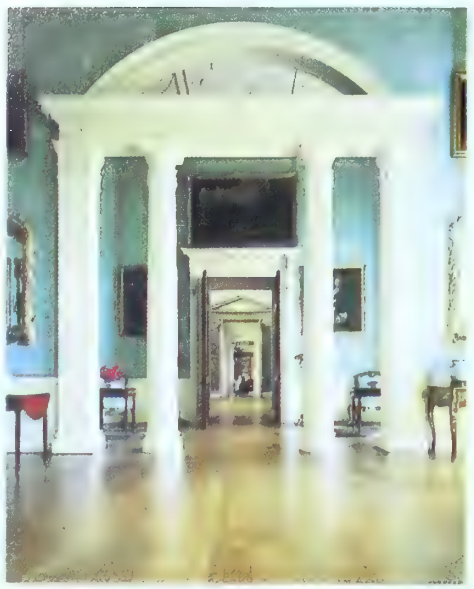
In the State Drawing Room with its great Waterford chandelier, the [illegible] were designed by Adam and John Linnell, gilder and cabinetmaker, with [illegible] dolphins, and tritons. On the far wall, *Cain and Abel* by Benedetto [illegible] hangs above *Sleeping Cupid on the Isle of Cyprus* by Orazio Riminaldi. Each corner of the room has a pedimented alabaster doorway, two of which are [illegible] designed for symmetry. *Opposite*: Reflected in the palm mirror designed by Adam in the State Bedchamber is the magnificent bed with cedar of Lebanon posts carved as palm trunks, the ruffled fronds framing the canopy.



(Continued from page 243) Paine actually built the north, or entrance, front with its appendages. His elevations are, like most of his work, strictly Palladian, dignified and a trifle dull. Then in 1759 Nathaniel Scarsdale met Robert Adam and was captivated by the young man's forceful personality and Roman tastes, which coincided with his own. Instantly he engaged him. Poor Paine retired gracefully, and so did Stuart, only less gracefully. Adam told his brother James that Stuart's plans were "so excessively and ridiculously bad that [his patron] immediately saw the folly of them and said so." Adam's behavior was to say the least bumptious and offensive. But he got where he wanted. The interior of Kedleston is his vindication. He created a suite of apartments within Paine's center block which are unsurpassed for grandeur and elegance. He also added the south front, based on the Roman triumphal-arch motif, with four columns standing detached from the wall, each carrying a statue. Above them rises a gray dome, and below, two arms of a staircase curve inward. The effect is startling—theatrical and full of movement. Unfortunately the corridors to be linked to two south pavilions were not carried out as Lord Scarsdale and Brettingham intended.

After climbing the double flight of stairs of Paine's north front, we pass under the lofty portico with its niches for statues and its roundels and walk straight into Adam's Hall, a superb apartment, 67 feet long, which was inspired by Palladio's interpretation of a Roman atrium. Colossal fluted columns and half columns of green-and-pink-veined Derbyshire alabaster frame three aisles. Within wall niches Adam placed replicas of famous statues of antiquity, and over them grisaille panels of scenes from Homer. Between the columns he put benches modeled on the tomb of Agrippa.

The center of the Hall, empty of furniture as a Roman atrium should be, has a gray pavement of Hopton marble in a starfish pattern. The pair of fireplaces bearing the Scarsdale arms are almost too exquisite for the robust architecture. There being no windows, light is supplied by lanterns in the coved roof, which has arabesque decoration by the famous stuccoist Joseph Rose. Axial to the Hall is the Saloon, or Roman vestibule, which occupies Adam's south front. Painted white and gold, it is a rotunda, derived from the Pantheon in Rome. The dome panels are copied from the Basilica of Maxentius. Four doorways are supported by pilasters of *verde antico* scagliola, a composition introduced to England by the Adam brothers. Each of the four large niches contains a cast-iron stove fashioned like a Roman altar. Alternate paintings of Classical ruins by William Hamilton and grisaille panels by Biagio Rebecca adorn the walls.



Alcove between Boudoir and Saloon provides intimate resting places.

Hall and Saloon together form the nucleus of Kedleston Hall. On either side of them are grouped a suite of state apartments without rival. To Boswell's disappointment Dr. Johnson was scathing. The house "would do excellently well for a town-hall," he growled. "The large room with the pillars would do for the Judges to sit in at the assizes; the circular room for a jury-chamber; and the room above for the prisoners." The immense sum which the whole place cost was injudiciously laid out. But rather than be impolite to his host who showed him round, he remarked of the Hall, "My Lord, this is the most *costly* room that I ever saw."

If Johnson could be curmudgeonly, Walpole was often catty about Adam's architecture. Nevertheless, even he felt obliged to admit after a visit in 1768 that Kedleston was "magnificently finished and furnished: all designed by Adam in the best taste."

To the east of the Hall and Saloon are the Music Room, Drawing Room, and Library. In the Music Room the gilded mahogany organ case, the marble chimneypiece inlaid with Derbyshire blue john (a rare local spar), and the suite of wheel-back armchairs in different woods are all to Adam's design. The outstanding features of the State Drawing Room are the pedimented doorcases and the Venetian window, all of Derbyshire alabaster, by a local carver, James Gravenor. Of the furniture the most spectacular pieces are four gilt sofas, upholstered in sky blue damask to match the wall hangings. Supplied by John Linnell, they have carved feet of intertwined dolphins and arms of shells, bulrushes, tritons, and sea nymphs. Walpole mocked them for being "absurdly like the King's coach," which indeed was largely designed by Linnell and none the worse for that.

The last room on the east side is the Library, its ceiling tinted in the original colors of pink, blue, and green. The seven mahogany bookcases are to Adam's design; so too is the kneehole writing table made by the estate joiner.

Crossing the circular Saloon, we come to the suite of rooms on the west side. Perhaps the most arresting pieces of furniture are the palm-tree mirror of the Dressing Room and the palm-tree bed in the State Bedroom. The bed was carved by Gravenor. The intricate posts and branches carrying the tester are of cedarwood picked out in gold.

Finally we reach the Dining Room. The flat plaster ceiling in low relief enclosing paintings by Antonio Zucchi and Angelica Kauffman was illustrated in the Adam brothers' *Works in Architecture* (1773). The inset framed wall paintings and the fireplace carved by Spang are precisely as and where they were in the 1760s; and the alcove still contains the three curved sideboard tables with marble tops, as well as the massive wine cistern of Sicilian jasper where Adam had placed it.

Kedleston is a unique survival of a palatial English country house whose rooms, furniture, and fittings evolved from the minds of a cultivated patron and an architect-decorator of genius. □

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(continued from page 174) people," Irvine recalls, "he couldn't drive, so he had a chauffeur who was like an old nanny and John was like an endlessly fussy schoolmaster. We'd be going to Gloucestershire and he'd be peering through his glasses saying, 'What date is that window?' If you couldn't answer, he'd explain to you, very curtly, and when you got through the whole horrifying day, you were asked it all again. And we'd very often stop to examine things. He was fascinated by a gate at West Wycombe Park. He'd say, 'It's like all those gates in Virginia. Now do a drawing of it.' So you'd do a drawing and take measurements. Then back at the office you'd have to do a scale drawing of it and he'd find fault with it and the next time you went to Gloucestershire you stopped again and he'd say, 'You see, I told you so. . .' And probably push you in the nettles!"



A 19th-century Japanese vase, 18th-century English chest-on-chest.

Irvine learned his lessons well. Ignore, for a minute, the elaborate ribbon trimmings on the pictures here, and observe with what careful respect for the elevations of walls they are hung. Equally architectural—and Fowlerian—is the use of a continuous palette to imply a progression from room to room. Note, too, the deployment of black elements throughout for staccato emphasis. "There's nothing new under the sun," Irvine says, "and I'm sure Edwin Lutyens wasn't the first to say it, but he *did* say, 'Every room must have a line of black in it.' "

"I'm also a great believer that every room should have a kick in the pants," he adds, perhaps remembering the nettles. Here it can be something as subtle as the witty tartan bow from which a dog painting in the library hangs, a seemingly discordant note that somehow has an astringent effect; something as emphatic as the dining-room walls, which are glazed "that lovely cooking-apple green that most Americans are afraid of, although the English just eat it up"; or it can be a note of black, like the superb needlepoint rug Irvine found which forms a sort of matrix for the arrangement of the living room.

"We love to see people buy the best rug they can," he says, "and then the least expensive rug they can in the next room, like the sisal carpet in the dining room, which is a statement of this moment in time. They're still young, and although she has all these yearnings of nostalgia, I think they also want to be au courant." Conceived in a spirit of pastiche—like so many of the most characteristic productions of our period—this apartment cannot escape a few anachronisms, as Irvine is the first to admit. "Look at all the money MGM spent on *Marie Antoinette,*" he points out, "and you can still tell that Norma Shearer's hair is pure 1937. One day, I'm sure, these rooms will look pure 1986. Then, of course, they'll be another 'look' to imitate."

For the moment, listen to the contentment of the cosseted couple who inhabit them. "In the end their value-add was tremendous," the panjandrum says of their decorators. "It now takes a lot for us to get motivated to go out in the evenings." "We had a housewarming, which is a very Southern thing," his wife adds. "All our friends came and raised a glass. And the greatest compliment we had was that none of them wanted to leave!" □

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(continued from page 215) Southern California. His design talents were quickly recognized, and he was encouraged to study architecture. Los Angeles in the early 1950s was at one of its several peaks of architectural fertility, and Gehry, whose capacity for friendship and connecting with creative people was already well developed, soon gained entree to the leading local figures in the profession and familiarized himself with their experimental works.

Aside from such venerable émigré masters as Richard Neutra and Rudolf Schindler, the most influential designers during Gehry's apprentice years were those involved with the Case Study Program sponsored by *Arts + Architecture*, the activist avant-garde magazine. Most famous of the structures produced by that group was the Eames house of 1949 in Santa Monica; its brilliant use of humble, off-the-shelf components and its intelligent mix of handsome though common materials must be seen as a spiritual antecedent of Gehry's own later work. "I find that materials aren't intrinsically ugly," Gehry explained in Michael Blackwood's 1983 documentary film *Beyond Utopia: Changing Attitudes in American Architecture*. "It's what you do with them, how you use them that makes the building. It's not that they are in intrinsic disrepute." The Case Study architects taught him that.

After graduating from USC in 1954, Gehry married for the first time (divorce came a dozen years later), served a hitch in the army (during which he designed "Wrightian" furniture for dayrooms at Fort Benning), and proceeded to work for a large L.A. architecture office before entering Harvard's Graduate School of Design to take a degree in city planning. Positions with several other firms followed until he opened his own office in Los Angeles in 1962. With him since the start has been his professional alter ego, Greg Walsh; most great architects have a selfless long-term colleague who is content to remain in the background as far as publicity is concerned, and so it is with Walsh, but his steady presence has been an important ballast amid Gehry's search for a new architectural identity.

Gehry, for all his interest in extending his vision, has remained faithful to



Model of dining hall for Camp Good Times, an unexecuted 1985 project in Malibu.

the basic principles he feels architecture must fulfill before it can be worried about as art. "If you're going to do a building for a client, you gotta be responsible to the client," he told Peter Arnell in an interview for *Frank Gehry: Buildings and Projects* (Rizzoli, $45; $29.95 paper). "You gotta do something that they're gonna (a) like, (b) get their money's worth from, and (c) get something that'll last and serve their purposes." You can't get more essential than that, but there were other things on Gehry's mind as well.

His earliest independent designs were clearly in the Southern California modern mode, but those houses, small offices, and stores had qualities that set them apart from the run-of-the-mill construction around them. None made more of an impact than Gehry's Hollywood studio and house of 1964 for the graphics designer Lou Danziger, a severe cubist arrangement of stucco boxes Luis Barragán might have been proud to claim. From that point on there were two Frank Gehrys: the solid, dependable, always-on-budget problem solver, and the incipient artist eager to do more than the minimum daily requirements. His circle of friends expanded to include virtually all the major figures on the burgeoning L.A. art scene: Billy Al Bengston (for whom Gehry designed an exhibition installation at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 1968 using materials that appalled the curators—unfinished plywood, exposed wood studs, and corrugated metal); Ron Davis (for whom he built a trapezoidal corrugated-metal house and studio in Malibu in 1972); and Chuck Arnoldi (with whom Gehry shared the building in Venice that still houses the architect's office).

From other artist friends such as Robert Irwin, Larry Bell, and Alexis Smith (the latter an alumna of the Gehry office) he received encouragement and ideas for his Easy Edges furniture, the playful corrugated-cardboard pieces that were manufactured during the early seventies and marketed at such upscale outlets as Bloomingdale's. The Easy Edges pieces are a paradigm of Gehry's simultaneous desires to be normal and exceptional, practical and artful, unconventional and adaptable. The leaps of imagination Gehry took with his Easy Edges designs were warm-ups for those he would make later in the seventies in architectural designs of a much larger scale. For the present, though, there were clients who required items (a), (b), and (c).

Most important of them was the Rouse Company, the Maryland-based real-estate development concern that became Gehry's mainstay during the mid 1970s. He designed housing, shopping malls, and their corporate headquarters in Columbia. He did it all extremely well, but beginning in 1976 (about the same time that Michael Graves initiated his own break with his Modernist past), strange things began to happen in Gehry's architecture.

He had long admired the way ordinary buildings appeared in progress ("They look like hell when they're finished—but when they're under construction, they look great") and decided to leave his that way. His Gemini Graphic Editions Ltd. studio and gallery of 1976–79 in Los Angeles was one of the first, and the funky aesthetic seemed perfectly suitable for the publisher of avant-garde art prints. But what about the architect's own house in a quiet middle-class neighborhood in Santa Monica?

Even after a decade the Gehry house has the power to outrage, and its scandalous reputation has been something of an albatross for its designer. The 1920s bungalow was found by Gehry's second wife, Berta Aguilera, whom he married in 1976; he decided to wrap the existing structure within a new exterior of corrugated metal, wire glass, and chain-link fencing. It seemed simple enough to him: "My intention was that . . . the new house would be richer by association with the old, and the old would be richer by association with the new." What he got for his good inten-

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there was a great deal of hostility from his neighbors and, on one occasion, a bullet through one of his windows.

He responded to the animosity this way in *Beyond Utopia:* "There's a smugness about middle-class neighborhoods that bothered me, I guess. Everybody has their camper truck in front, everybody has their boat in back. There's a lot of activity related to hardware and junk, and cars and boats and stuff. And the neighbors have come around and said, 'I don't like your house.' And I say, 'What about your boat in the backyard? What about your camper truck? It's the same material, it's the same aesthetic.' They say, 'Oh no, no, that's normal.'" Gehry has learned the hard way, as have Moore and Venturi, that it is sometimes quite difficult for architectural imagery taken from the vernacular to be returned to its original sources, and often least appreciative are the people who customarily live with it.

If anything, however, his appetite for going further still was not diminished, though it is little wonder that his most extreme essays in "exploded" architecture—his Wagner house in Malibu and his Familian house in Santa Monica, both designed in 1978—were never executed. The new Gehry style struck the perfect chord, however, in another LACMA exhibition installation, for "The Avant-Garde in Russia, 1910–1930," held in 1980. Gehry's instinct for making spaces in total sympathy with art of various kinds was never better illustrated than it was in those galleries: his exposed slats and raw plywood were precisely in the spirit of the revolutionary artifacts on display, and the objects and their setting drew strength from one another.

Ironically, some say disgracefully, Gehry was eliminated from consideration for the two major Los Angeles museum commissions that are being unveiled to the public this fall: the addition to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (which went to Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates) and the Museum of Contemporary Art (which went to Arata Isozaki). The lingering insecurity that afflicts the Los Angeles art crowd led to Gehry's getting scratched from the lists early on, lest the world misunderstand that either project was a parochial effort. In doing so, the city snubbed its one architect of international stature and only reinforced the aura of provincialism that it had sought to dispel. But Gehry savored a well-deserved revenge when his Temporary Contemporary for MOCA (given to him as a kind of consolation prize) was hailed upon its completion in 1983 as one of the most spectacular museum spaces in a period awash with new galleries and additions from coast to coast. Still the sting persists, especially since he knows full well what a good job he would be able to do at this point in his career. "Please give [me] a museum to do, world," he only half-jokingly pleaded in one recent interview.

Gehry's immediacy is a rarity in his compromising profession

Since about 1980, Gehry has been in a kind of professional free-fall, having bailed out of what remained of his corporate clientele. "In the past five years I've had to rebuild the practice from scratch," he admits but is quick to add that "it has been scary financially and gratifying personally." The freedom allows him to make creative detours when the spirit moves him. His continuing associations with artists (Richard Serra for the 1981 "Collaboration" show, Claes Oldenburg for a 1985 Venice performance) are a source of great pride as well as stimulation. Commissioned by the Formica Corporation in 1983 to design an object using their new ColorCore plastic laminate, he dreamed up the first of his fish lamps, actually light-up sculptures that have nothing to do with practical illumination. Fish had been a recurrent motif in his life since childhood and now became a major theme in his work as well. He proposed a fish-and-snake folly for a show of architectural caprices at New York's Leo Castelli Gallery and built a life-size (human, not piscine) fish structure that was exhibited earlier this year in Florence and Turin. Friends now deluge Gehry with fish memorabilia, and some will find added import in his astrological sign, which, of course, is Pisces.

As his range has widened (it is a very long way from Jim Rouse to Leo Castelli), his outlook remains remarkably consistent. Although he dotes on esoteric critical readings of his work and runs with the big boys of art, he laudably refrains from the pretentious pronouncements that some of his peers feel compelled to issue in the interests of posterity. Gehry is far from the naive "hands-on" tinkerer he has been made out to be from time to time, but neither is he an ideologue in this most ideological of architectural times. Through the years he has kept alive his gift for immediacy, a rarity in a business, profession, and art form that more often than not smothers spontaneity during its slow, often compromising, process. Though his brave choice of a chancy direction has made Gehry a perennial beginner, it is that incentive to seek new perspectives that gives his architecture all the anticipation and excitement of a new day in the morning. □



Gehry's Information and Computer Sciences–Engineering Research Lab, University of California at Irvine, 1986.

"The Architecture of Frank Gehry" is on view at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis through Nov. 16 and then travels to the Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston (Jan. 31–Mar. 22, 1987), the Art Gallery at Harbourfront, Toronto (Aug. 14–Oct. 11, 1987), the High Museum of Art, Atlanta (Nov. 28, 1987–Jan. 9, 1988), and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (Feb. 5–Mar. 27, 1988). It is accompanied by an excellent catalogue of the same title (Rizzoli, $45; $29.95 paper) with a foreword by Henry N. Cobb, essays by Rosemarie Haag Bletter, Coosje van Bruggen, Mildred Friedman, Joseph Giovannini, Thomas S. Hines, and Pilar Viladas, and commentaries by Frank Gehry.

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...ued from page 188)

João V must have thought very highly of Thomas Germain and his work, for when the master craftsman died in 1748, the king personally paid for a memorial mass to be held for him in Lisbon, which all the gold- and silversmiths and other artisans of the city attended.

Unfortunately almost all of the original order made by Thomas Germain was destroyed in the Lisbon earthquake of 1755, which killed over 75,000 people and devastated most of the city, including the royal palace in the Terreiro do Paço. It was left to João V's successor, José I, to make good the losses, which he did with alacrity, although there was a period when he had to borrow from his friends among the nobility to meet his immediate needs.

The order, which he placed in June 1756 with Germain's son François-Thomas (then barely thirty years old), comprised over 1,250 pieces in four *cobertas* (service sets). By the end of the year 120 workers were employed on the job, according to the king's commissioner. The first three parts of the order were finished during the next eight years, but the fourth was only partially completed because François-Thomas Germain went bankrupt in 1765. Thereafter the correspondence between Paris and Lisbon takes on a more acrimonious tone with disputes about payments owed, deliveries unmade, and promises broken. Despite help from the king, Louis XV, Germain remained over two million livres in debt. To complete the fourth part of the Portuguese order, he asked for an extraordinarily large sum. It was refused. So we will never know what might have materialized from such unusual projects as a proposal for a "large centerpiece showing His Majesty [King José] giving his orders to personifications of Art and Architecture for the rebuilding of Lisbon, with various buildings in a state of construction and others on the drawing boards." The king's commissioner apparently took one look at Germain's poorly executed clay maquette of this project and dismissed it as "monstrous and ridiculous." Then there were designs for two endpieces: one representing the discovery of Brazil by Pedro Álvares Cabral in 1500, the other *America Offering Its Fruits to Its Monarch*. Part of the latter project might well have been completed because in the collection today there is an amusing group of gamboling American Indian putti supporting mustard pots on their feathered heads and salt cellars on their shoulders.



Set of soup and rice ladles by Ballin

The documents and correspondence relating to the assembling of the service are fascinating as historical records and invaluable in identifying many of the objects, but it is only when you see the actual pieces in the collection that you realize the extraordinary combination of imagination and technical skill that went into their making. The tall glass-fronted cases in the museum's silver gallery are filled with a wealth of objects: covered dishes that look like silver mille-feuilles pastries; mustard pots in the shape of oyster shells; a unique set of silver-gilt figurines representing various nations of the world; a solid-gold royal luncheon service for a party of one; a pair of exotic kettles with grimacing mandarins holding dragon-head spouts on one end and with spread-winged swans on the other. The variety is endless and stimulates the imagination.

What must it have looked like when displayed as a complete service and lit by candlelight? The first time this happened was apparently at the state dinner given to mark the accession of Queen Maria I to the throne in 1777.

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"Three tables were furnished"—we are told—"with the precious and copious silverware made recently in the court of Paris by the celebrated silversmith Germain by special order, and it appeared in public to the greatest admiration and applause of all those Portuguese and foreigners who had the honor of enjoying this new and pleasing and brilliant spectacle never before seen at similar functions."

One wonders whether the menu on these occasions was as slavishly *à la française* as the table setting, or—as seems more likely—whether the Versailles format was enlivened by the exotic influence of Portugal's widespread connections overseas. Certainly most of the sweets and desserts for which the Portuguese were famous were based on recipes from Goa and Macao. Then there were the curries and rice dishes and sundry other culinary marvels from the East.

William Beckford, that brilliantly eccentric, wealthy, and witty aesthete who lived for a time in Portugal in the 1780s, has left us some vivid descriptions of Portuguese food and social life of the period. At the wealthy monastery of Alcobaça, for instance, he was treated to a meal of "rarities and delicacies, potted lampreys, strange Brazilian messes, swallows' nest soup and sharks fins dressed after the mode of Macao by a Chinese lay brother." Then dining *en famille* with his friend the marquês de Marialva, he was given a "dinner served in plate with huge, messy dishes brought up by a vast train of gentlemen and chaplains, several of them decorated with the Order of Christ." At a more formal party given at a newly built palace at Seteais in Sintra (now a hotel), the hostess, "sparkling with diamonds," provided a very festive entertainment of "bright illumination, a profusion of plate, a striking breadth of table, every delicacy that could be procured and a dessert frame fifty or sixty feet in length, gleaming with burnished figures and vases of silver flowers of the most exquisite workmanship."

The French silver service went with the Portuguese royal family when it was forced to flee to Brazil during the Napoleonic invasion of Portugal. Some of it remained there when Dom Pedro, the king's son, was proclaimed the first emperor of Brazil in 1821, but

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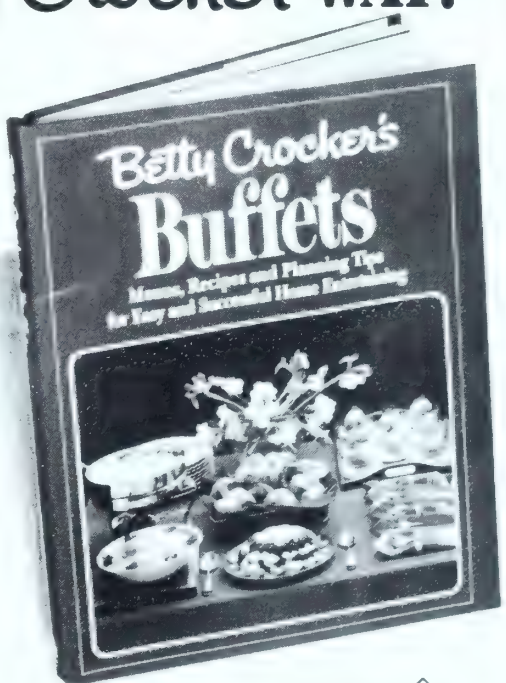
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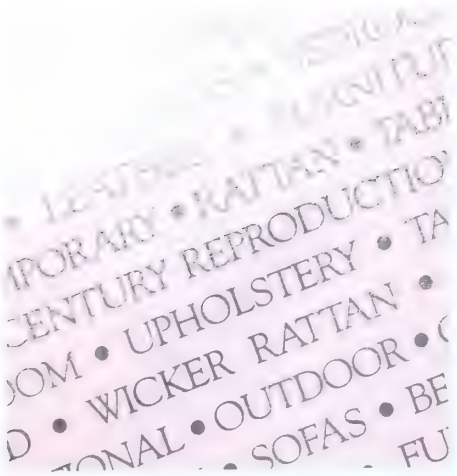
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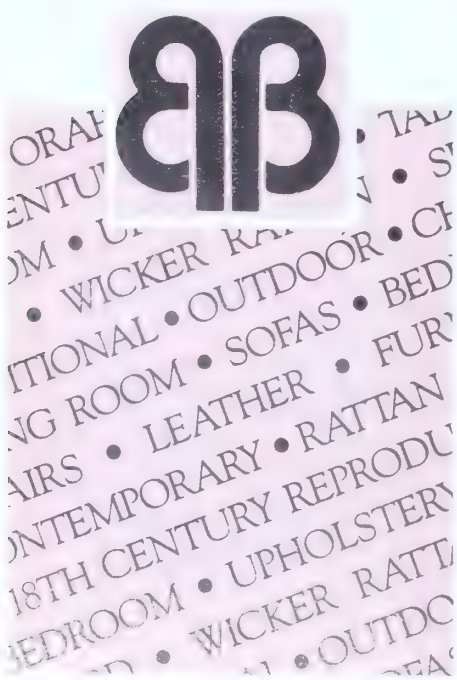


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the main part returned to Portugal. It was last displayed in its entirety in 1886 at the wedding of Dom Carlos, then duke of Bragança, to Amélia d'Orleans. A contemporary account reports that it caused a "great deal of excitement among the guests."

Selective parts of the service are still brought out on special state occasions. President and Mrs. Reagan had Germain's candelabra before them when they dined at the Ajuda Palace in 1985, and that same year Queen Elizabeth of England was treated to Cousinet's golden figurines dancing down the center of the table linked, as their designer originally intended, by garlands of fresh flowers held between their outstretched hands. □

Produced by Babs Simpson

CRAFT COMEBACK

(Continued from page 229) donated a town house two doors west of the good old Modern to house the first national Contemporary Crafts Museum.

Thirty years and several moves later, the American Craft Museum (so named in 1979) has a vivid new home, designed by Fox & Fowle Architects, at 40 West 53rd Street. Its inaugural exhibition, "Craft Today: Poetry of the Physical," offers a rich celebration of Mrs. Webb's gentle vision and a clear view of how much American crafts have changed. True to its title, the show comprises nearly 300 works by 286 artists. None predates 1980. All reveal that the unselfconscious usefulness and medium prices that once typified American handiworks have disappeared. Drab practicality apparently drained away from craft, leaving bright shells of self-expression.

It turns out that MOMA was right: industry did kill the broad demand for handmades. But, as Mrs. Webb lived to see, the loss simply encouraged their makers to daydream over their work. The results are goblets, chairs, and bowls that dissolve in metaphors around the house. "Their conception obviously stems from use," says Paul J. Smith, the museum's director and show's curator, "but their appearance and execution tell you only to look. That duality of utility and aesthetics is part of the appeal of many contemporary works."

That is the news in this show. Crafts have finally moved to the outskirts of invention. There everyone tinkers like Einstein, rethinking the world of household and personal adornments. The *Styx Ladderback Chairs* made by Jon Brooks are just one example. The ladders appear to have been borrowed straight (or crooked) from a Miró landscape. Here domestic comfort has yielded to gallery expression, but the chairs remain invitingly tactile. You want to run your hands along the spindled pieces, to touch the delicate calligraphy Brooks carved, then colored, into the wood.

That sense of touch is central to most works done in the name of craft. The reason, Smith speculates, "is that the physical manipulation of material becomes a potent mind process for craftspeople. The best of them are able to convey that through their objects." Bennett Bean's glazed and gold-leafed earthenware bowl exemplifies in clay that exchange between hand and eye.

Other works, such as Jokan Ohama's handtooled *Replica of Southampton, New York House* and Pamela Studstill's *Quilt #53* are emphatically visual gems of elaborate structure and color. Even though Ohama went on to build a full-size house according to the miniature plan, the beauty of the little structure is entirely its own. In fact that's the case with each work on display. One by one they emit a hushed plea to be accepted as they appear, on their own terms.

That may well be the deepest change in the attitudes of modern craftspeople. For the most part, they show little interest in meeting the traditional utilitarian requirements of their media. "What matters," says Smith, "are the the artist's intentions." Accordingly, Smith and his colleagues organized the mammoth show not by medium, but by four categories that attempt to peg the object *As Statement, As Vessel, For Use,* and *For Personal Adornment.*

However, few of the works keep to their slots. They tend to slosh between two or all of the above. And throughout the four, the only constant is the absence of a dominant trend or style. As with the current arts, says Smith, "the crafts are enjoying the plurality of no-style." And that's as it should be, he thinks—a reflection of the maturity and growing democratization of American culture.

That broadening spectrum is what the new museum was designed to accommodate. Thought to be the first condominium museum in this country, it is economically and architecturally independent from the 35-story E. F. Hutton tower, designed by Roche, Dinkeloo Associates, that encases it. The museum had been pleased with Fox & Fowle's renovation of its previous location on 53rd Street, so when the new home arose, Fox & Fowle again was asked to draw up plans.

The resulting four-level museum is tailored to the museum's request for "simplicity, flexibility, and quality." A four-story atrium, wound by an elliptical stairway, sets the exhibition tiers back from the glass façade. So visitors to the inaugural show are likely to feel that they're approaching stacked rows of candy in a cabinet (the rules are the same: look, don't touch). Within the galleries, walls can be removed or rehung along a gridwork in the coffered ceiling.

Gone are the days when the museum could muster only a one-course meal and then would have to lock its doors to change the menu. The three new display areas and one lecture hall permit several simultaneous exhibitions, roomy visits and demonstrations by scholars and artists, and rotating exposure of the more than four hundred objects from the museum's permanent collection. In short, it is a dream come true, a small monument to Mrs. Webb, showing the taste she preferred to serve. □

"Craft Today: Poetry of the Physical," sponsored by Philip Morris Companies, Inc., is on view at the American Craft Museum through Mar. 22, 1987, and then travels to the Denver Art Museum (May 16–July 5, 1987), the Laguna Art Museum, Laguna Beach, Calif. (Aug. 7–Oct. 4, 1987), the Milwaukee Art Museum (Feb. 12–Apr. 10, 1988), the J. B. Speed Art Museum, Louisville, Ky. (May 16–July 10, 1988), and the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond (Aug. 9–Oct. 2, 1988).

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ON VIEW

Current exhibitions not to be missed



According to What, 1964, by Jasper Johns, collection of Mr. and Mrs. S. I. Newhouse Jr.

MASTER CLASS

Seven American Masters" is not a catchy show, but it does offer enough in the way of depth and quality to slow down anyone who has a mind to stroll through the National Gallery's East Building on route to somewhere else. The synoptic retrospectives or ambitious single works by Ellsworth Kelly, Roy Lichtenstein, Barnett Newman, Al Held, Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns, and Mark Rothko do ask to be appreciated on their own terms, especially since curator Nan Rosenthal has shuffled the historical order in which the atists appear in order to dramatize their stylistic differences. The euphoric carousel of styles revolving round Lichtenstein's room gives way to the meditative setting for Newman's fourteen-panel *Stations of the Cross,* hung in an octagonal chapel under diffused natural light, and stilling the mind to follow an austere figure of black verticals as it changes form. Other single objects not to be missed: Rauschenberg's *Automobile Tire Print,* or how a Model-A Ford gave birth to a Japanese scroll; and Johns's *According to What,* which, among other things, offers a majestic display of artistic rhetoric. Thirty years after the fact, it is clear that Johns and Rauschenberg were proposing not so much a reaction against Abstract Expressionism as a kind of Modernism in which the dialogue between romantic and realist values would continue in perpetuity. In any event, we have a fine opportunity to engage the issues raised by this intensive show on postwar art, drawn from the Gallery's permanent collection and augmented by many loans crucial to the understanding of these artists' development. But beyond this, here is our chance to gauge the extent of the museum's commitment to the contemporary scene. Except for isolated artists' rooms, not since the East Building opened in 1978 has the Gallery shown such solid support for American Modernism's postwar implications. Until mid November, with some of the artists' rooms on view through spring.

Marjorie Welish



Lapidary vision: *White and Greens in Blue,* 1957, by Mark Rothko, *left.*
True grit: *Target,* 1964, by Jasper Johns, *below.*



MYTHS OF THE MACHINE



Kem Weber's Air Line chair, 1934–35.

What symbolizes an era most? If we look at the art and artifacts created in the U.S. between the two world wars, we find it was not the fear of God nor the love of money but the fascination with the machine. The belief in its force and power provided ample metaphors for the age, as revealed in "The Machine Age in America, 1918–1941," at the Brooklyn Museum from October 17 to February 16. Paintings by Charles Sheeler, furniture by Paul Frankl, architecture by Raymond Hood, sculpture by Alexander Calder all characterize the dynamic thrust of the period. The exhibit is cocurated by Dianne H. Pilgrim and Richard Guy Wilson and accompanied by a catalogue they wrote with cultural historian Dickran Tashjian. Aesthetic steam will propel the show to Carnegie Institute's Museum of Art in Pittsburgh, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and the High Museum of Art in Atlanta. *Suzanne Stephens*



Walter Dorwin Teague's Bluebird radio, 1937–49.

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ROYALTY STATEMENTS

Though by no means a monarchist, sculptor Richard Rudich chooses royals as subjects for his ceramic bas-reliefs (at O.K. Harris Gallery in New York through November 1) because he is fascinated with individuals who suddenly find themselves anachronisms, "innocent leftovers" of history. *Gabrielle Winkel*

Crown Prince with Son, 1986



PRETTY BAUBLES



From 1785 to 1885, jewelry was not mere frivolity but a touchstone of the times—romanticism, sentiment, a taste for exotica. "The Jeweler's Eye," at the Hudson River Museum in Yonkers through December 7, has pieces from one of the best Victorian jewelry collections outside England, that of Gilbert and Nancy Levine, and period prints, costumes. *Margaret Morse*

Swiss brooch; English turquoise snake



CALL OF THE WILDE

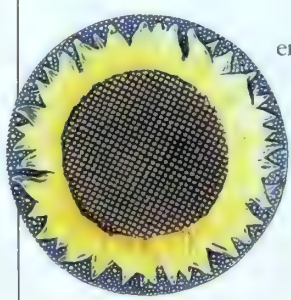


Portrait of Miss Dora Wheeler, 1883, by William Merritt Chase.

If you've ever been fascinated by Victorian furniture or found it weird but lovable, "In Pursuit of Beauty: Americans and the Aesthetic Movement," on view at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York until January 11, is the show for you. Painting, sculpture, and choice specimens of all the decorative arts the American Aesthetic Movement produced are arrayed thematically in the most comprehensive exhibition ever on the subject. Introduced by a section on English origins, the show presents the Aesthetic belief that amateurs as well as professionals can excel in decorative arts. Thanks to this contextual exhibition and its thoughtful, gloriously illustrated catalogue (Rizzoli, $60), one realizes that the Aesthetic Movement is "more than a style," as project director Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen says, "it's a mind-set." *M.W.*



Above: Vase, silver-gilt polychrome enamel, 1877. *Left:* Majolica saucer, glazed earthenware, early 1880s.



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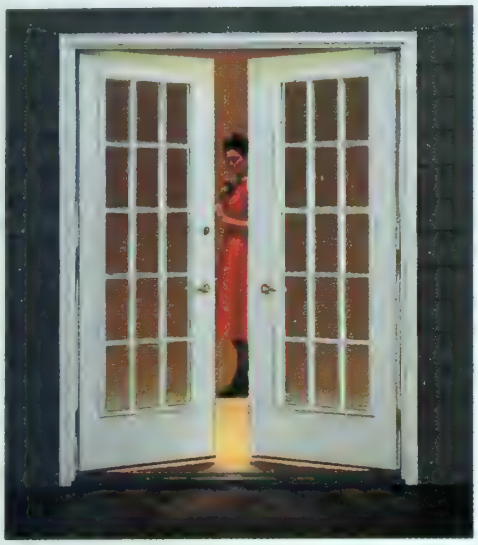


Jewel Rock, acrylic on linen, 44 x 48 inches, 1982

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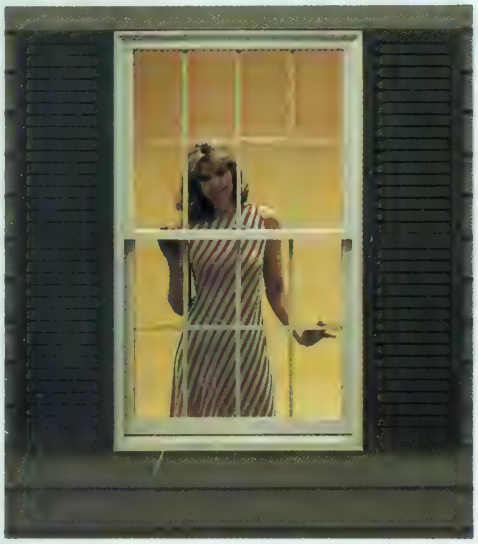
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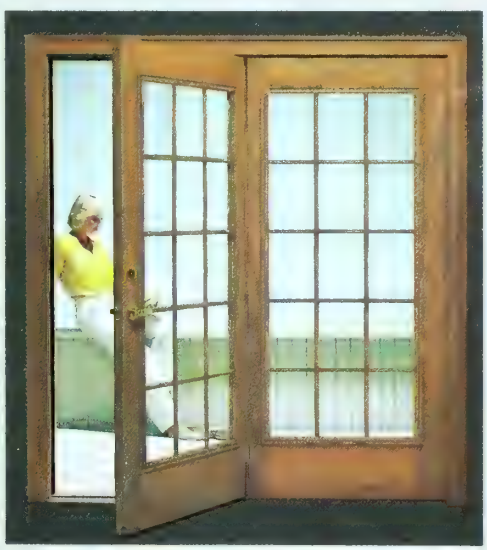
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(Continued from page 219) create axial interior views. The old windows were replaced by small-pane double-hung sash or French doors, all fitted into enlarged openings. Raised-panel doors and reveals were installed, and strong composite moldings were designed, some made from as many as seven elements. Instead of just being large, the spaces became inviting and formal, traditional not only in applied trim but also in proportion and symmetry: changes that are not skin- but bone-deep.

The rooms were then ready to accept good antiques and luxurious textiles. With almost the entire house to fill (the owners wanted to retain only a few mementos from the wife's well-appointed childhood home), the decorators went shopping in the auction houses and showrooms of New York and in shops there and in Philadelphia, Locust Valley, Southampton, and elsewhere. A secret source supplied vibrant wallpapers printed in the 1930s; hand-blocked rather than silkscreened print fabrics were chosen for their greater richness of color and visual depth. Some of the seating is deliberately eccentric, whether it is antique or newly made, because the designers dislike the "decorated" look that the "usual favorites" bring. They are also bored with the popular "English" clutter. Anthony Baratta says, "We like to think that in our rooms you know where to look. We like bold shapes and patterns, simple, balanced arrangements, and lots of air between the pieces. We also want playfulness and warmth, but never confusion."

Bestowing a free hand and complete trust did not mean the client was bypassed when choices were made. The designers sometimes tried to anticipate her reaction. "Do we dare?" they said about such unconventional details as the figured carpet in the bedroom, the dimensions of the master bath, the library's wall color. "Yes, she can handle it," they would conclude. Her husband, their children, their large extended family and many friends can "handle it" as well. The house, for all its beauty, is a comfortable center for the kind of expansive visiting we read about in novels of a century ago—just what the couple had in mind when they called in the decorators. □

Produced by Carolyn Sollis

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(continued from page 166) polished gray-black granite floor stretching seventy (Herbert says it's eighty) feet from the place where you stand incredulous (is it really to walk on?) to the light-tumultuous far-off wall of windows and doors . . . sky-filled, greenery-filled (Herbie and Nora collect exotic, sculptural plants) . . . to a glimpse of white terrace where inset like a clear-cut, oblong gem is a black-black swimming pool. Here one early afternoon, between spectacular cloudbursts, I saw a pas de deux as enchanting as any I ever saw in over sixty years of ballet-going: Misha Baryshnikov and his ravishing five-year-old daughter, Shura, frolicking like creatures born of air and water. The Ross house is a constant flux of ballet, moviemaking, book writing, scriptwriting chums, a veritable bustle of talent.

The enormous room is islanded with Retreats for Relaxation: open-armed, fat-lapped, white-cotton-covered sofas with plump, color-streaked cushions giving generously onto broad-surfaced, low-lying tables; chairs for those who prefer straight and hard and for those who need soft and yielding; tables of traditional dining height used sometimes for dining, sometimes for picnicking, always for games, or just plain flopping beside to argue the purchase of treasures or inadvertently to free a notion that could become a prize-winning movie. And everywhere the glorious surprises of the Ross collections. Even the chair you are sitting on is Egyptian Revival, first quarter of the nineteenth century, probably Russian and in its original crocodilish leather upholstery. The settees, so conducive to loitering for hours, are from long-ago Ceylon. The outsize low-lying twin tables are inset with original Burne-Jones–designed tiles.

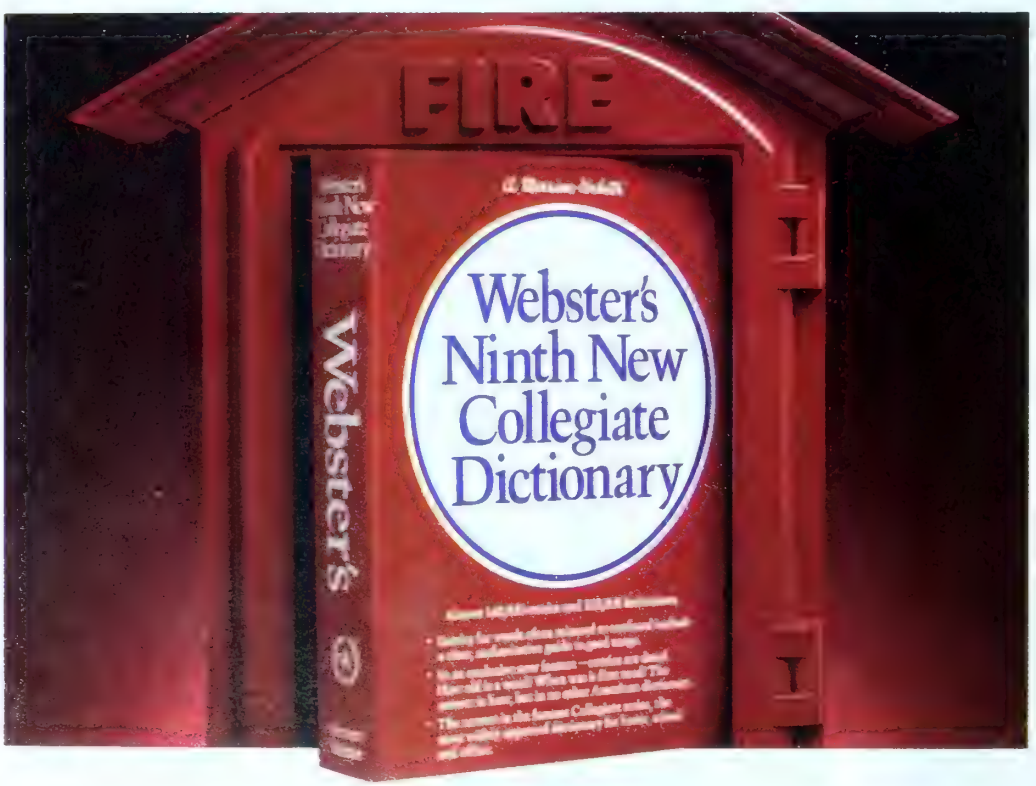
Island-hopping. This "loft" compels island-hopping. "I've never seen so many marvelous things I never saw before," exclaimed the L.A.G.L. on her first visit, and she's been everywhere and seen almost everything.

"Oh! It's seasons," Nora said. "I mean, as you go from the front door to the doors leading onto the terrace, you pass through Winter and Autumn and then Spring and Summer."

So we island-hopped and off-island-hopped. We wintered before a flame-happy gas-log fire, comfy-cozy in its Moderne fireplace. Rod-slender Eileen Gray lamps stand at sofa ends, paradoxically in accord with Regency-inspired shellwork-framed looking glasses, eighteenth-centuryish shellwork jeweled dolls. On a chest a bevy of well-grown-child-size, severe-faced figures, fashioned in eighteenth-century Portugal to be clothed radiantly for churches, "where they represented saints," according to the West Coast dealer from whom they were bought. On the Ross customary table, between sofas, stands a Satsuma saki urn large enough to tide over a snow-peak village through the toughest winter in Japanese history. Upon the paisley ground, which surfaces the urn, monkeys frolic, hoards of monkeys. The Rosses love monkeys. Monkeys, figuratively speaking, are everywhere in this house.

Across the deep dark granite, where Winter and Autumn seem to meet, is the barroom, the serving part below floor level, the bar and its seats on the floor level, a stage set in itself, black stone, contemporary Italian furnishings, and—but why should this astonish in this house—a brace of full-bodied blanc-de-chine Buddhas, reverse-glass paintings from India, a Joseph Cornell play-pretty, another by local artist Betye Saar, a Memphis lamp, a facing wall hung with a bounty of nineteenth-century Palissy ware. Surely Palissy is the dark side of majolica.

I sat at the bar looking out into Autumn and Spring and Summer. I looked at the improbable chest from Goa in its carapace of tortoiseshell and mother-of-pearl; the French country cupboards and sideboards, especially the fourteen-foot walnut beauty, so chaste, so refined. Did it start its life in a church tiring-room long, long before Balzac wrote of our breed, "One of those lunatics known as collectors"? I looked at the tables, chairs, whatnots, étagères all made of roots and hard to find. I looked at the fantastic chinoiserie clock, intricately wrought of ormolu and blue and rose-pink porcelain. Herbert saw it on the cover of a Soth-



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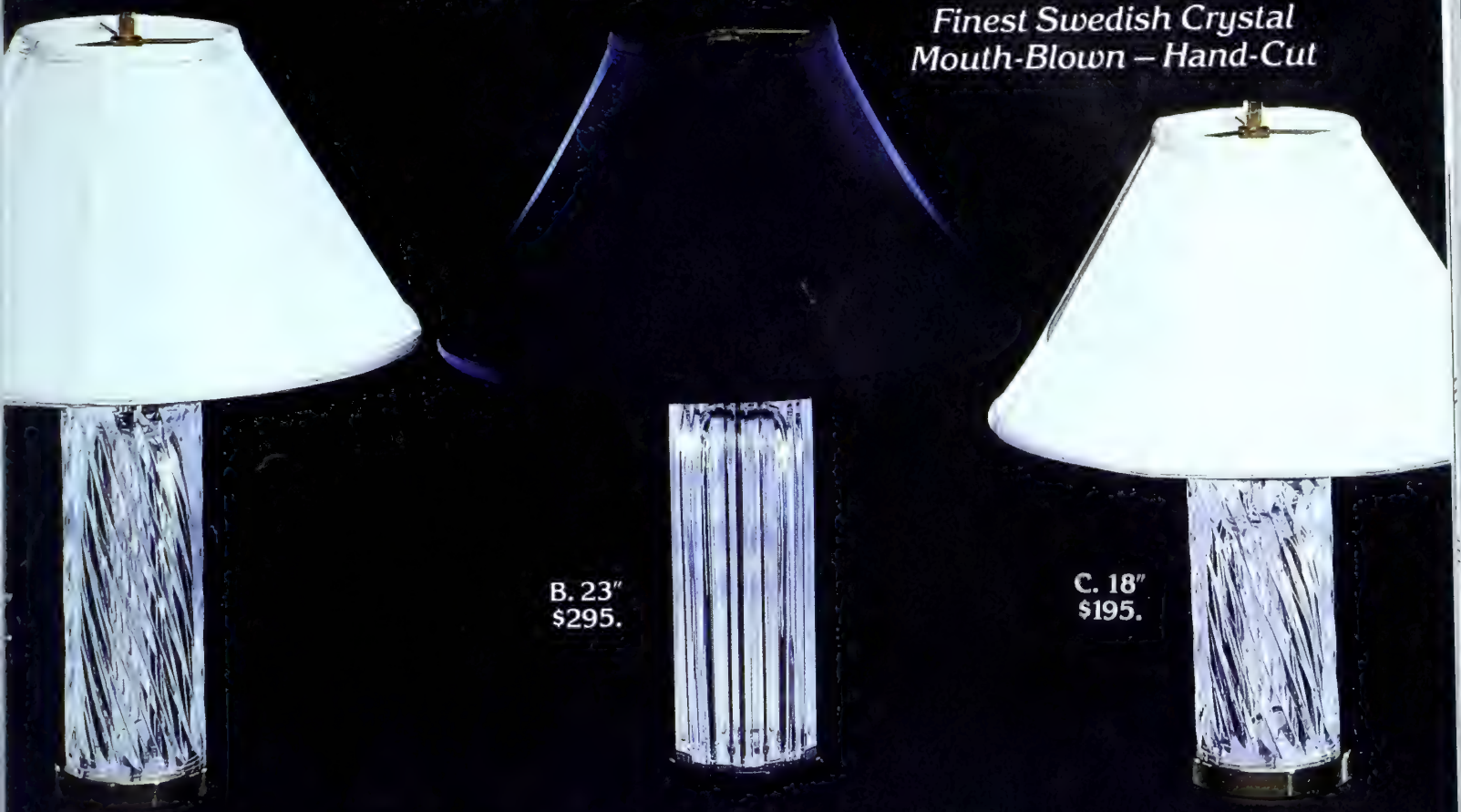
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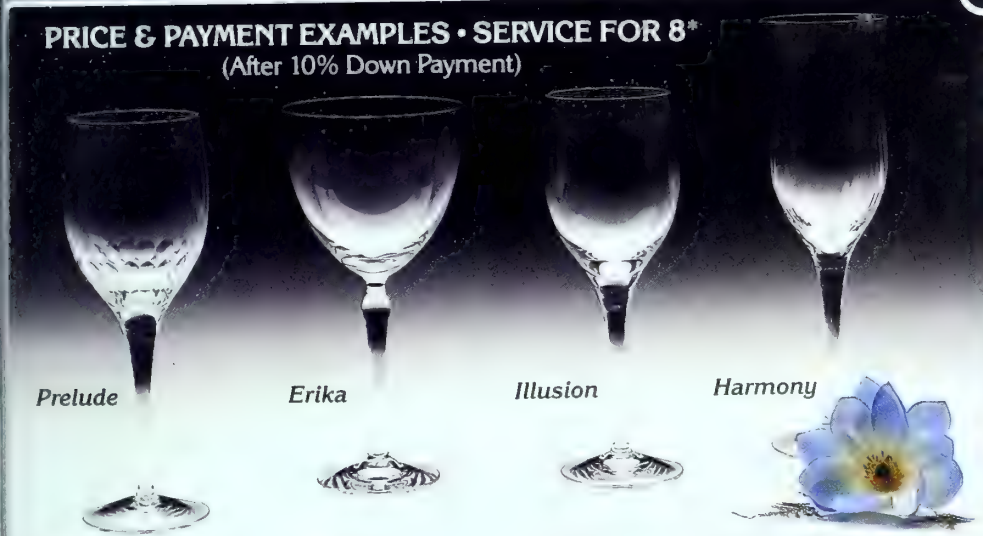
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eby's catalogue and knew immediately that it had to be his. Nora wasn't so sure. It is *theirs*. "A very elaborate way of telling time," drily commented a covetous friend.

I looked at the twin English tables flanking the street doorway, tables loaded with Sumida Gawa ware, usually mislabeled Poo ware, as I was told by Addie Newman of Beverly Hills, the expert *antiquaire* from whom Nora bought some of this collection of highly collectible Japanese ceramics kilned from 1867 until well into the twentieth century: a jolly array of smallish, highly glazed pots, cylinders, and bowls in reds and blacks and greens, lively with three-dimensional figures of people, animals, even "florals." Typically Ross, I thought: a plenitude of curiously serious frivolity, anthropomorphic, brimming with secret laughter, magical. All set out on Edwardian tables redolent of Great English Houses at their palmiest. Herbert and Nora have perfect placement the way some people have perfect pitch.

Spring: an island of transparency for the most formal dining. "Actually," Nora said, "we can eat in at least seven places." But Spring is *the* place, a space that floats. One wall is almost entirely Rauschenberg's *Sling Shots*, his light box *assemblage* that can be adjusted to create kaleidoscopic varieties of patterns as you watch. A see-through, all-glass, metal-supported, no-frills rectangular table set upon a signed, delicately and palely patterned silk Tabiz carpet. Bitsch chairs from Harvey Probber. A custom-made sideboard notable for the collection of handblown glass upon it, the profusion of choice china in it, and Jules Olitski's *Cythera 2* above it. A Memphis cart. And crowning it all, a dazzling twelve-candle Venetian glass chandelier. Now what holds all of these disparate wonders, this tremendous cabinet of curiosities together? I haven't yet ventured into the library and master bedroom. And I haven't said a word about the Hockney and the Stellas . . .

Herbert said, "Yes, we're very motley. There's no real unity. We're very peculiar. Look at the root things—a very peculiar taste. I guess collecting reflects your passing fancies. We buy on whim, like playing house. We're not specialized collectors."

Nora said, "Yes. We *tend* to like and



The library with Nora Kaye and Herb Ross's collection of icons.

dislike the same things. Sometimes we overwax. Herbert is more refined. We travel a lot. We live in so many other cities and places when we make movies. And we're always buying."

Herbert said, "Nora likes things it takes a longer time to like. Nora loves icons. I came to like them." There are now 33 remarkable icons ranged lovingly on shelves in the library. "Nora prefers high ornamentation. You've seen the wonderful things she makes for our Christmas tree and the intricate egg she made from bits of her *Giselle* and *Swan Lake* costumes and all that painstakingly stitched patchwork she made by the yard while she sat quaking with fear as she flew from ballet date to ballet date schlepping bags of scraps with her."

"Well," Nora said, "I guess I love needlework and handwork with a lot to it because of all those years I stitched and stitched and stitched my ballet shoes."

Herbert looked at the "loft," and glanced toward the offstage apartments. "I think the range of imaginative spirit in what we've gathered here is so wonderful."

The range of imaginative spirit: that holds this trove all together. Everything I see, regardless of any original utilitarian purpose in time of creation, was made to give pleasure, to titillate, in some way, the senses. Each object complements the others and, while revealing its own individuality, sharpens the eye of the beholder to the particularities of the others. In this house there is emotional give-and-take as intense between objects as it is between the people who assembled them.

And so here we are suddenly and appropriately in *the* bedroom. Which is dominated, of course, by the bed. Nora and Herbert have had this bed to come home to for almost the entire period of their married life. It is a bountiful four-poster brass so boisterously ornamented as to be a somewhat restrained species of churrigueresque. "We found it," Nora says, "in Canada. Somehow it got there from Tunis—Victorian Tunisian, we think."

The house abounds in the mystery of the migration of treasures. There are so many unanswered, unanswerable questions of provenance, and this in itself engenders fantasy, so releasing and relieving.

A lilac room. Delicately flowered Tricia Guild fabrics. An enormous chaise. Lavishments of pillows. Books on shelves, on tables. Armadas of heterogeneously framed photographs—friends and relations, the world famous and the lovingly enfolded obscure and: Vivien Leigh. I think that there isn't a room in this loving house that doesn't have at least one photograph of Vivien Leigh. And what used to be called knickknacks and have now become "collectibles"—galore! Furniture: everything from the best Biedermeier and papier-mâché to distinguished nondescript, including Edwardian clothespresses for which I would give one of my prize pieces of nineteenth-century majolica. But Herbert and Nora have majolica. The walls: a scrapbook of Victoriana. Everywhere bowls of lush old-fashioned pink roses.

Herbert says, "Most everything in this bedroom was bought by Nora." There are two Ross-important collections in this bedroom, one minorish, the other major. Minorish: the Noddies, a relentlessly cheerful and expanding gathering of little nodding families—mommies and daddies, pashas and lawyers, and determinedly independent Kate Greenaway people, all nodding, when urged by a gentle push from a finger, in a most positive, knowing way. This see-all, know-all community resides on a nineteenth-century table at the foot of the bed. The major collection: figures, mostly in bisque, porcelain, and bronze, of black musicians, dancers, game players, children on childish pursuits and larks—genial "portrait" figures. Black people living active domestic lives or lives of entertainment in the latter reaches of the nineteenth century. They were fashioned in Germany, Austria, France, England (where Harriet Beecher Stowe had a great influence), and, of



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...se, at home, here, in the USA.

I talked to Naomi Wright of Silver Spring, Maryland, from whom Nora bought most of the concourse and who is a major collector and authority on black artifacts. "These are not derogatory black pieces. I have only positive images," she told me. "That's what Mrs. Ross bought. True artists showed the beauty of black people. Most of the pieces with positive images were created in Europe."

On the way to the library I have, after almost three years of visiting this house, a sudden revelation: the vastness of the loft is made cozy not only by the islands of comfort and the way the eye is pleasured by the variety and singularity of the accoutrements but by Peter Choate's subtle architectural arrangement of "wings" (that is what they are called when they are part of a stage set) imperceptibly portioning the room and his adjustments to the height of the ceiling.

Now, offstage again, the library: to the right of the street door and looking out on Herbert's own, very private bonsai garden. "The room," says Herbert, "began as a theater collection." That is immediately apparent even before we get into the large, squarish repository. On a George I wall table sits a vitrine in which stands a construction, flatish, perhaps two and one-half feet high, as blithe and whimsically intricate as a garden house in a Japanese woodblock of the late 1850s. Red lacquer, gilt decorations, a plenitude of miniature gilded bells, this clock—for that is what it is—could inspire the most gorgeous production of *Turandot*. On the table, surrounding it, a cavorting of little Chinese figures, always in pairs and sometimes viewing with alarm—but what? On the wall a very large looking glass, the most amazing in the house because it is framed in a reverse-glass painting composed entirely of crudely painted scenes of nineteenth-century Japanese harbor life.

This a room for complete relaxation—a nest of huge sofa and chairs centered on a low-lying table covered with books, convoluted ceramics found in Hungary or Czechoslovakia, boxes ("I love boxes, boxes in boxes," says Herbert). Here they show movies, watch TV, listen to lots of music, cuddle their Imperial Family of Yorkies—Nicholas, Alexandra, and Sophie—and munch (there is as much eating at the Rosses as there is in any good-life pre-1917 Russian novel or play). So this is yet another friends-and-relations room. And a room for some business. The latter is conducted on a venerable, expansive architect's desk found at Sotheby's. It happens, in usual Ross style, to be surrounded by four sturdy Russian chairs, circa 1820.

So by way of the 33 gold-gleaming icons ranged on one wall, we get to the real theater of this library (which does have shelves crammed with books). Here are Herbert's tinsel prints, those folderols with which Victorians celebrated their favorite actors and productions, posturing them with loving exaggeration, tricking them out in Christmastime colored tinsel papers. Here are Staffordshire groups of Heroines and Heroes and Villains. And here, on a vivaciously carved Georgian console table, is Herbert's favorite theater treasure: "It's the essence of Chinese theater. Probably made sometime in the nineteenth century. . . . Fantastically dressed Chinese ladies on grillwork balconies: rich, cluttered, detailed, bits of gilt paper, red silk—very clamorous. Bizarre!" Then I looked toward the windows and the formal green quiet of Herbert's bonsai garden, and I saw on shelves in the watery light of the windows an array of antique figures: Pompeian, Syrian, Cycladic—serene, pared down by custom and time. Herbert said, "Some are as early as 1500 B.C. I love them."

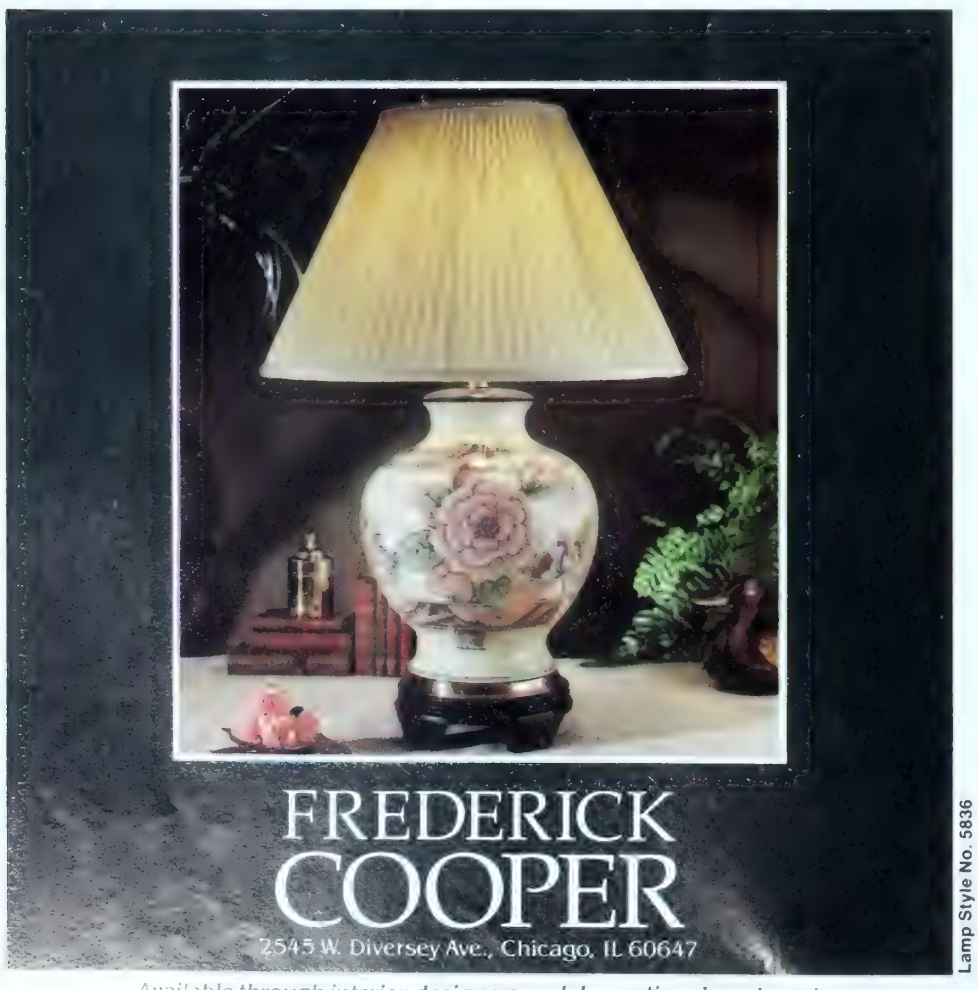
Months later, when Herbert was filming in New York, Nora and Herbert called.

Herbert said, "We just started a new collection: French art glass by Verre Française, enameled glass, all signed, and two Steuben lamps made in the early twenties—really ravishing. And a Steuben Verre de Soie bowl. Then Nora bought one of those dippy things she's always buying!"

Nora said, "Oh, Herbert!"

Then they laughed and laughed. □

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(Continued from page 195) shorthand. You won't hear her saying, "That room has an English country look." Instead, it will have the quality of "hard smart," "plucked eyebrows," "home and mother," "lemon on the oyster," or "iced-coffee white," to name but a few of her designations.

"There are so many materials and arrangements that I call 'hard smart.' It's cold stylish," says Elisabeth Draper, as if to explain, and goes on to interpret "iced-coffee white" to mean a "greige"—a gray beige, just like the color she saw many years ago in Madame Grès's salon.

As for "plucked eyebrows": "When a room looks like plucked eyebrows, it's all so tight. The curtains are tied back so tight. The glass is too bright. Everything is too hard, no cushions, no creases, no soft."

"Home and mother" is "just a very nice, well-printed chintz. It's not a bit stylish, but it's very nice—like curly, sandy-golden hair on an awfully nice child."

And "lemon on the oyster" is not gastronomic but a change of pace or the element of surprise in the design of a room. "A room needs accent," she declares, "which could be texture, color, scale, rhythm."

Elisabeth Draper's accents can be found all over the United States and abroad, from Hammersmith Farm in Newport to the American ambassador's residence in Paris to the Eisenhower farm in Gettysburg to the White House (including Henry Kissinger's West Wing office). Her clients do not all come from the corridors of government, however. She also has been called in by Yale, Smith, Columbia, and Miss Porter's School, has designed for banks, clubs, hospitals, and hotels, and has even invented a centerpiece for royalty.

"Mrs. Paul Moore asked me to help decorate the Queen Mother's banquet for the English-Speaking Union in 1953. We only had a $7.50 budget for each centerpiece, and since this was for the British Commonwealth, I got the idea of doing a globe. So I asked Amory Houghton, who owned Corning Glass and whose houses I had done, to donate some glass balls. Then I got some young men to help draw, etch, and sandblast Australia, Africa, India, and other parts of the Commonwealth. Then we glued stardust to highlight the Crown countries. We made about 150 centerpieces and I kept the cost down to $7.49 each."

Elisabeth Draper, whose father was a prominent New York City banker and whose mother descended from Louis Comfort Tiffany, started being cost conscious at the time of the crash, the same year of her divorce from Seth Low, a nephew and namesake of the turn-of-the-century mayor of New York City.

"I had to do something to help support my nine-year-old son. I was torn between staying on Long Island, living that gentle, lovely life, and perhaps having a little 'giftie shoppe' there, or moving to the city and really hitting the professional trail."

Mrs. Draper chose the latter, going into partnership with her sister, Louise Tiffany Taylor, who previously had worked with Tate & Hall. "I was a 'tweeny.' I was just learning. I was between being a wife and mother and becoming a professional. I had to go to night school to learn the things I couldn't learn through osmosis. I learned drafting, furniture construction, and even took a course in Oriental rugs at the Metropolitan." (She wasn't new to learning additional skills; after she graduated from Spence School, her coming-



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out party was canceled by World War I and she became a first-class wireless operator.) Mrs. Draper entered her profession at the bottom of the ladder during the golden age of interior design. Nancy McClelland, Ruby Ross Wood, Eleanor McMillen, Rose Cumming, Elsie de Wolfe, and Syrie Maugham were just some of her contemporaries. "I was watching everybody. I was a little scared of them. I read about them. I cut pictures out of magazines."

The first three were "the people who did the rooms that I really admired most in those days," says Mrs. Draper, who nonetheless ignored Ruby Ross Wood's advice to develop a definite style because she wanted and still continues to do whatever the job requires. "I'm grateful to them for teaching me how to behave. I was young and absorbing like a blotting paper.

"Ruby Ross Wood taught me tactics and discipline, and she said that you had to work with a clean palette. I think she was the first person to talk about fresh colors. Before that, colors were muted."

Mrs. Draper was eventually to do some teaching of her own. Mario Buatta was one of her beneficiaries. "She has a wonderful sense of color and a very high regard for Classical order," says Buatta. "I remember going to her apartment for the first time. There were painted floors, a beautiful canopy bed, busts on brackets on walls, apricot walls, a dark green library. It was the first time I had ever seen apricot-glazed walls with wonderful live green curtains. This apartment was very special. I learned a great deal from her. She is a decorator of that old school with an innate sense of what is right and how to put it all together. She is amazing."

The former Mrs. Seth Low was introduced to Dr. George Draper, a respected New York internist, in 1930 by her friends and clients the Allen McLanes. "They had asked me out to see a prizefight, since I loved to go to fights." After a five-year courtship, Mrs. Low became the second Mrs. Draper. Dr. Draper's first wife was interior designer Dorothy Draper. "She was the famous and I'm the infamous," laughs Elisabeth Draper.

"Everybody feels it's high time to make a little noise about Elisabeth Draper," says Mrs. Joseph Roberto, the executive director of Old Merchant's House, in Lower Manhattan, a restoration in which Mrs. Draper has been instrumental. "She has never sought publicity. She always has a sense of extreme privacy for her clients. And because of that, she hasn't needed clients. They come to her."

Mrs. Draper doesn't really talk about her distinguished yet "quiet" clients. She admits to being called by Dwight D. Eisenhower, then president of Columbia University, to refurbish the President's House. Like many of her other commissions, that assignment led to a long association with the Eisenhowers, which included work at the White House, Blair House, and their Gettysburg farm. She designed some twenty rooms at Blair House, including the chief-of-state bedroom for Mamie Eisenhower as a memorial to the late President. Mrs. Draper created an aubergine Eisenhower toile for the bedspread and curtains with scenes depicting events and places from his life. She chose mahogany furniture because "it had a deep gloss that is strong with the weight of integrity, which I think reminds you of the man."

Anne Eisenhower, the President's granddaughter, later trained under Elisabeth Draper and now has her own interior design firm. Mrs. Draper, widowed in 1959, is still training others in the art of what she makes very clear is interior design.

"Decorators are painters who decorate your walls. You decorate a Christmas tree. But you design a room. You create a room. It's a little more profound than to decorate. I always tell my staff, polish your nugget slowly. New York is full of designers who can't live up to their publicity." □

Produced by Carolyn Sollis

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(continued from page 203) herbaceous ...s, small flower beds, and mown ...wns. But the composition remained nevertheless thoroughly ordered and symmetrical, for Lutyens instinctively ...ed the need for a formal garden as a bridge between the discipline of his classical edifice and the contrasting freedom of the rugged country side. The viceroy's garden, no less than his abode, was meant to dramatize the triumph of human control—British imperial control—over the natural universe.

Lutyens's viceregal garden may be regarded as an extension of his great palace. The massive, nobly severe parapet walls that enclose the garden literally grow out of the lower basement, while the interlocking rectangles of the house plan pervade the parterres. Walls and terraces cascade across the landscape in three waves to the level of the plain, where a tranquil circular pool climaxes the main garden axis.

As in Islamic gardens and their Italian progeny, water gives a theatrical unity to the whole at Delhi. Two shimmering channels run westward from the palace façade and intersect a pair of north-south canals to form a two-hundred-foot-square island, ideal for a garden-party marquee. Set at the heart of the traditional four-part Mughal plan, this pleasant greensward skillfully transforms the inherited design into a plan at once original, handsome, and practical.

Today the president of India's outdoor receptions seem little changed from the entertainments of the British Raj, when bright uniforms and flowing saris dappled the lawn at white-clothed tea tables under the shade of wide scarlet-and-yellow umbrellas, while a military band played sprightly tunes. Intricate variations in level throughout the garden, as well as scores of topiary trees and two tall sandstone gazebos, still endow Lutyens's composition with the appearance of a giant stage set. Special effects on noteworthy social occasions are provided by fountains whose twelve-foot jets create perfect rainbows above scalloped tiers of sandstone lotus leaves. Beside the palace two larger fountains of eighteen leaves embellish rectangular pools where reflections repeat with double charm the blooms and the building. Water, flowers, lawn, and trees magically combine to evoke the celebrated pleasure dome of Kubla Khan: "...bright with sinuous rills,/Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree."

Set like bastions along the garden boundary, the North and South Forts, each 94 feet square, are aptly named. Their sharply sloping walls rise solidly from plain to parapet, as powerful and timeless as Tughlaq Shah's tomb in Delhi or Marshal Vauban's fortresses in France. Above, formal terraces of English flowers are spread beneath the azure blue sky, offerings, as it were, to the gods of India. In the southern enclosure a fountain jet springs from an octagonal pool. On the north terrace, a perforated pipe rings a round void, and water cascades twenty feet in a showery circle to a grotto tank where a slender jet dances.

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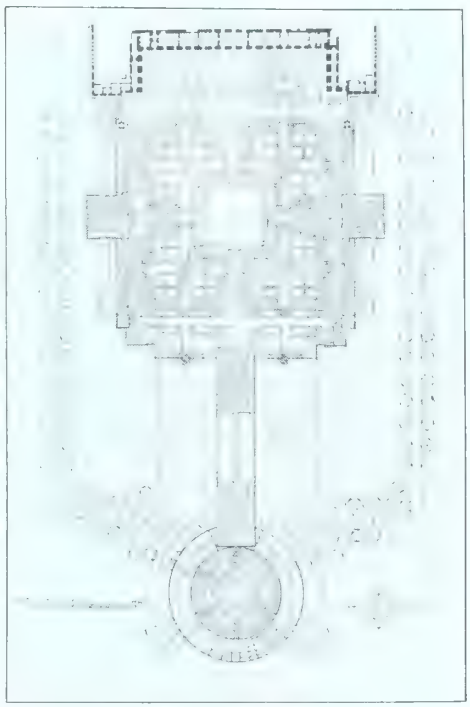
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self toward an extraordinary wall of consecutive sandstone hoops which screens but also announces by its relentless circular geometry the tennis courts below. Beyond, a narrow 430-foot-long enclosed garden divides grass tennis courts from clay and directs the guest westward between walls animated with niches like those Lutyens had admired at the Escorial. The visitor's steps (and fevered brow) are offered welcome and cooling shade by that most ancient form of garden decoration, a pergola. Sculpted of rhubarb red sandstone, this version stands twelve feet wide, bridged in part by cantilever beams counterweighted by remarkable pendants resembling elephant trunks.

The visitor's progress culminates in a sunken garden, at once dramatic and serene, its profusion of vivid flowers spilling down in tiers to a round pool, sixty feet wide, where only a gentle bubble ripples the glassy surface. A high orchard wall ensures privacy and peace. Here the viceroy would retreat with his wife from affairs of state to take afternoon tea and savor the last hour of sun and its magic afterglow.



Garden plan shows palace at top, Round Pool Garden at bottom.

Then a gray haze would steal over the gardens.

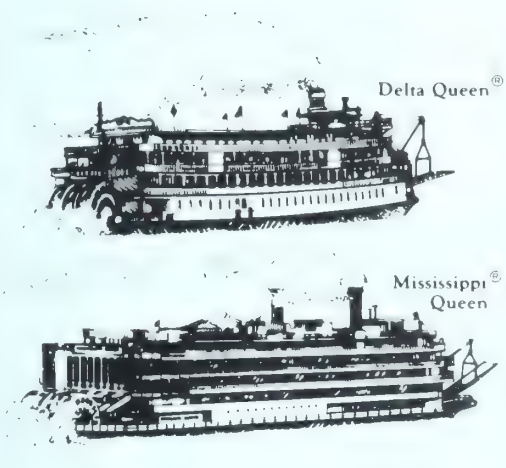
On the ridge, jackals cried at the moon, and flocks of green parakeets twittered overhead on their way to roost, while sometimes the song of a solitary bullock-cart driver could be heard in the distance. The scent of mignonettes mingled in the air with the perfume of roses. Stars glimmered in the velvet sky and sparkled on the darkened water, while the fountains formed lunar rainbows.

Lutyens huddled with the director of horticulture, William Robertson Mustoe, over many Delhi breakfasts to create the formal garden that unfolded over fourteen acres west of Viceroy's House. This boldly patterned Oriental carpet was merely a fraction of the 250-acre landscaped estate whose specimen plantings had few rivals anywhere.

Jacaranda, "flame of the forest," and other blossoming tropical trees splashed their bright hues across the lawns and avenues of the park, the

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nine-hole golf course, the eight tennis [illegible], and the cricket ground. A sixteen-acre "utility garden" provided not only vegetables and citrus fruit for the viceregal table but also three thousand new rose bushes a year and a daily abundance of fresh flowers, arranged by twenty of the 418 gardeners. In the past half-century the grounds have flourished and matured, scrupulously maintained by a staff whose skill and ample numbers remain impressive.

To the east the thirteen acres of Viceroy's Court formed a physical and symbolic extension of Lutyens's palace. The red sandstone retaining walls that enclosed the 1,150-foot-long forecourt emerged directly from the north and south façades at the lower basement level, binding British edifice and Indian hillock in a powerful embrace. Western technology had even altered and subdued the landscape to serve imperial intent. Blasting had reduced the summit of Raisina Hill by twenty feet, and a constant flow of precious water had brought fountains and luxuriant greenery to the arid eminence.



A stream of water cascades twenty feet into a square fountain-centered tank in the North Fort grotto.

The lushness of the viceregal gardens accentuated the inhospitable nature of the surrounding landscape, burnt tawny by the sun. The patterns of water, color, and symmetry from Lutyens's hand were in marked contrast to the drab, dusty, almost treeless wilderness outside the estate. The formal palace edifice and its geometric garden, juxtaposed against the untamed Delhi Ridge, served as a telling affirmation of the passionate British resolve to bring order to the subcontinent. But the masters of the Indian Empire could display a keen attention to matters of beauty as well as an ardent interest in the exercise of power. Indeed not only the viceregal gardens but also the expansive green parks throughout New Delhi today remain one of the most enduring legacies of British genius, the work of men confident in their noble purpose, shaping nature for the commonweal. □

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Neo-gothic armchair in mahogany, cathedral style", France, ca. 1820

LIVING UP TO THE DAKOTA

(Continued from page 158)

Marino's goal was to design and decorate the apartment as if Christopher Whittle were its very first resident, moving in in 1884. It therefore had to be reconstructed not only literally but by a feat of the imagination. It was—the apartment has a largess, a prodigality amounting to nothing less than an act of imaginative bestowal. Marino prides himself on being a dedicated historicist. "I would never do this apartment in any building *but* the Dakota," he says. "I researched the building's past, what the architect's point of view was, to achieve an authentic feeling."

For Marino, the project offered the additional opportunity to put together several period collections. "It was an A-to-Z job. Everything was collected especially for the apartment—right down to the Georgian silverware." Working with Whittle, for whom the apartment became a passionate preoccupation, Marino amassed an important collection of nineteenth-century

European paintings, drawings, and watercolors and early-twentieth-century American paintings; a major pottery collection ("A prize acquisition, a Dirk Van Erp bowl, a pure round shape in copper, Whittle's maid put laundry detergent in and left down in the basement, next to the washing machine; luckily we rescued it in time"); even a collection of candlesticks, Russian, French Empire, Georgian cut crystal, American bronze, seventeenth-century English twirled wood, nineteenth-century English feldspar and jasper ("I wanted candlelight everywhere, fires in all the fireplaces, ormolu shimmering on the furniture. Look, the apartment was a dark hole. The essence of the Dakota is dark, of course, but it's Christopher Whittle's idea of merry—he's a very serious guy").

As in the nineteenth century, the major rooms are painted strong colors: the dining room oxblood, the living room gold, the study terra-cotta. They were all done with pigment paints in the ultramatte nineteenth-century method where the colors were mixed with milk. Halls were always neutral, so the central core of the Whittle apartment, a long windowless space called the gallery, is pale gray—decorated with stencils.

Dominating the gallery is a full-length portrait by the American Impressionist Richard Miller: a woman in a white shawl is looking into a mirror set above a commode. Marino found a large oval Regency mirror exactly like the one in the painting and hung it perpendicular to it, giving the suggestion that it had been the artist's model. The twelve-foot-high gold-thread curtains on the portal from the gallery into the living room are from a set of eight late-nineteenth-century Aesthetic Movement curtains by Templeton of Glasgow that were in Wardour Castle in Wiltshire.

One of Marino's specialties is working directly with small factories in England, Italy, and France. The silk for the sofa in the living room was made in Lyon, and the sofa itself, designed by Marino after a model from the 1880s, was made by "a *tapissier* in Paris that's been in business for 140 years. And to make the curved steel frames for the upholstered chairs in the gallery, I used a company that's been making hoops for carriages for at least a century. I'm

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Twelve Roman emperors in Renaissance garb reign supreme in the dining room—Nero, Octavianus, Claudius, Tiberius, Titus, Vespasian, Vitellius, Caligula, Galba, Otho, Domitian, and Julius Caesar: French eighteenth-century decorative paintings. "When Peter first showed them to me," Whittle says, "I thought they were going to be the only modern thing in the apartment. When I heard eighteenth century, I was very surprised. Nineteen twenties I would have guessed—they're kind of stylized." I tell him they remind *me* of lines from a recent John Updike poem in *The New Yorker* conjuring the stone Caesars around the Sheldonian in Oxford: ". . . grotesque great heads,/Roman in style, modern in mocking manner,/ . . . eyes agoggle/ . . . leprous yet imperial." Whittle laughs, "I like a lot of faces in a dining room—it's like more guests at dinner."

Gustave Doré's monumental *Ruins by the Seacoast,* formerly in the Huntington Hartford collection, hangs brooding on a side wall of the dining room—a mood painting. The lofty fireplace is by the eminent American architect Frank Furness (Marino retrieved it from a Philadelphia town house that was about to come down); griffins with feathery chests and ears are carved in the massive mahogany. There are also griffins etched in brass on the firescreen, and as the light flickers they appear to be moving. In candlelight the whole ceiling scintillates, its thousands of hand-stenciled 22-carat-goldleaf triangles dissolving the masculine solidity of the room. The walls wear a band under the cornice adapted from a Navaho blanket, then a second decorative border—above wainscot paneling—taken from a housepainter's design book of the 1880s.

For Whittle the dining room has a double function. When he removes the eighteenth-century French silk-damask cloth from the French mahogany table, and opens hidden doors in the panel that reveal storage cabinets, telephones, and pads and pencils, he has an instant late-twentieth-century conference room.

The 20-by-34-foot living room was the dining room when the kitchen, which used to be the master bedroom, was where the study is now. "We started with the carpet, as we always do in a major room," Marino says. It's a nineteenth-century Sultanabad—an Oriental garden carpet, deep blue with floating flowers. The Orientalist painting movement was one of the crosscurrents of the time, and some of the flowers of that movement unfold on the living-room walls. But the greatest painting in the room is the American Impressionist F. C. Frieseke's *Lady on a Gold Couch,* a richly patterned portrait of the artist's wife reclining on a French settee, her head resting on ruffled pillows. It hangs above the sofa with its pillows of goffered silk.

The study/guest bedroom was a long shoebox of a room, so Marino designed an alcove within it to make it appear less long, at the same time giving it an Orientalist look. He hung a pair of nineteenth-century Senneh kilim carpets, the same terra-cotta color as the room, on either side of the alcove and took stencil patterns from them for the walls and ceiling. Then he threw four Persian carpets on the floor, one on top of the other, and put a pair of rare Christofle vases, done in the 1880s in the Orientalist fashion with silver-and-copper inlays, on the fireplace. On the walls: a series of watercolors of flowering grasses, dated 1881. "They were used by Napoleon III's cavalry to instruct young cavaliers as to which plants it was safe to have their horses eat," Marino explains, adding with a laugh, "People think they're just lovely flower prints, and I say, oh no, on the back it says things like, 'If your horse eats this, it'll vomit and die.' " I can't



Kitchen is on the site of a former bedroom

resist turning one of the prints over, and there, hand-written—along with the name of the recruit who had passed the test and could identify the field plant—is the caveat: "The fondy leaves when the plant is young give a horse a very bad odor."

At the end of the hall to the master bedroom is a large Chabannes La Palice pastel of 1903, *Portrait of a Young Man:* a French aristocrat in Edwardian attire—at once world-weary and worldly-wise—is sitting at the top of some stairs leading to a library. "We put it there to give the passage greater depth and perspective," Marino explains. "You feel you can just walk right up the stairs in the picture, that somebody's actually sitting there."

The curtains in the bedroom are very thick green wool, almost like a carpet—"made by the same factory in France that made all the jackets for Napoleon's army," Marino points out. On wooden rings, they can be flipped over in summer—transformed into a green-and-white cotton stripe from a lining fabric. A superb pair of Persian pots from the Safavid dynasty serve as lamps on either side of the bed, their Benjamin Caldwell bronze mountings encrusted with gold filigree and semiprecious blue and red stones catching, holding, refracting the light.

All of this brilliance—every moment of work, every inch of detail, every scintilla of atmosphere—was brought to full effect one recent evening when Marino and Whittle collected a small group of friends to sup in celebration of the apartment's completion. We ate golden beluga caviar, roast quail, and charlotte russe off imperial Russian porcelain, each plate glittering with its own royal palace in St. Petersburg. Afterward, we gathered round the 1870 massive rosewood piano in the living room as the Metropolitan Opera baritone Dale Duesing sang Charles Griffes's "Evening Song" and Edvard Grieg's "Ein Traum"—songs in fashion at the time the Dakota was built. For a moment the time clock had stopped. Suspended in the dazzling anachronism Marino had created, where not a thing was out of resonance, I knew that when I left there to hail a cab I would be half expecting a carriage and driver. □

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Bijar (partial view)
12'2" x 9'6" circa 1890



Kazak
4' x 3' circa 1860



Kuba
6' x 4' circa 1890



Ravar Kerman
6'6" x 4'6" circa 1840


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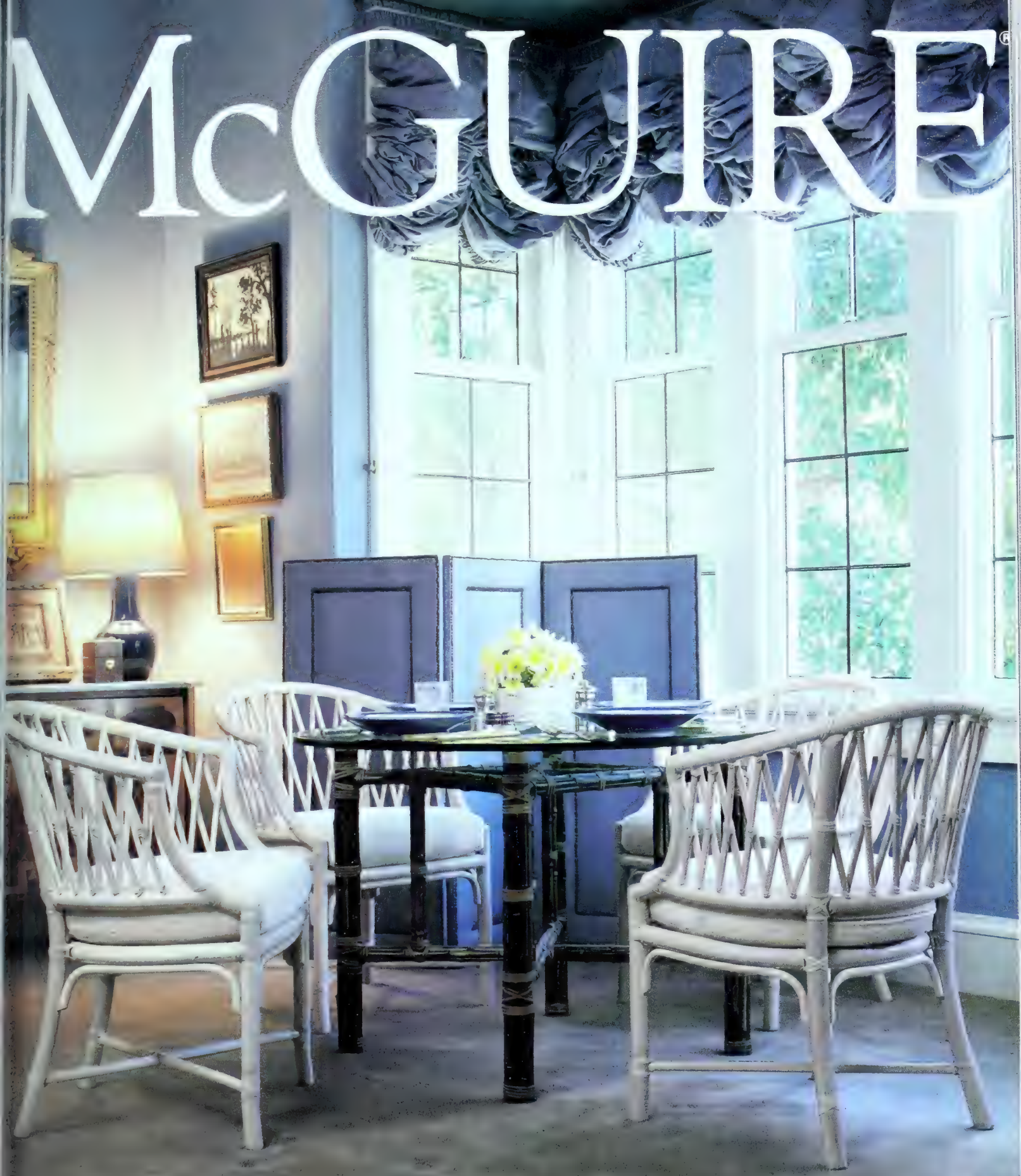
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Decorated by Marlo with baby's breath and seed pearls in the same miniature scale, a Fraser fir makes a spectacular Christmas tree in the ballroom of Henry McIlhenny's house on Rittenhouse Square.

Can it be that another December is coming? Like most families, we tell time at our house by the progress of our children—Amy is now a seasoned sophomore at Smith College after a summer working in the fashion department at *Vogue,* and Lauren has declared an industrial-design major in her junior year at New York's Brooklyn Tech High School. So we would have more time to catch up with our young women, Jane and I did some of our Christmas shopping while in Venice and Milan this fall. Now we will all be able to concentrate on what we like best about the Christmas season—the hospitality that surrounds that special day.

Hospitality is what Henry McIlhenny was best known for, as John Richardson's story, page 114, makes delightfully clear. Proposing the story for this issue, senior editor Nancy Richardson came up with the idea of taking New York flower person par excellence Marlo Phillips to the McIlhenny mansion on Rittenhouse Square to create Christmas in the middle of the summer so that it would be ready for our pages this month. When bright red apples couldn't be found for the urn under the Empire mahogany side table, Marlo discovered that plump vine-ripened tomatoes would do as well for Christmas in July.

Hospitality, of course, doesn't have to be limited to a special season, which is why the owner of the room on our cover and pages 124–131 determined to make her living room, library, and dining room one large space, the better to receive guests in numbers large or small. Notice how low bookshelves, back-to-back sofas, and a Coromandel screen suggest divisions yet don't interfere with the openness of the overall scheme.

Many of the gifts we enjoy year-in, year-out are from the past, and there are several superb examples in this issue. Among them are the Treasures of the Green Vaults, page 106; Titania's Palace, page 142; the re-created Barcelona Pavilion, page 150; and the beautiful gardens of Dumbarton Oaks, page 156.

Another such legacy was left by J. Paul Getty, whose decorative-arts collection in the Getty Museum in Malibu is considered by many to be one of the best in the world. Last year at a Los Angeles dinner party given by Kalef Alaton I met Gillian Wilson, the young curator of that collection, and I was as charmed as anyone would have been. But now that I've learned more about her—as you will when you read Rosamond Bernier's text, page 188—I'm also very, very impressed with the considerable accomplishments of this talented young Englishwoman.

But to get back to Christmas: the high point for me is when our family and friends gather around the dining table laid with Jane's grandmother's gold-trimmed, pale pink Haviland, glowing with candles, and fragrant with the flowers I arrange while Jane watches over the even more fragrant kitchen. Much of the season's magic comes from the re-creation each year of treasured traditions, the evocation of which makes Jane Kramer's story of her family's experiences of Christmas in France my favorite piece in this year's December issue. You'll find it on page 52, our Christmas present to you along with our wish for the merriest of Christmases and our promise of a new year full of surprise and wonder, at least in the pages of House & Garden.

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THE INCOMPARABLE REDS

Claret, crimson, coral, cerise, Chinese, Pompeian, Venetian

By Mark Hampton



Claret red, old leather, an Agra rug in Christian Dior's 1950s Paris sitting room.

Everyone loves red—it is the happiest of colors. We all grew up surrounded by red things: toys of all sorts, wagons, bicycles; the list is very long. You don't think little boys would want to be firemen if fire engines were battleship gray instead of gorgeous red, do you? As the years go by, we continue to be surrounded by the familiar cheerfulness of red possessions and red clothing from coats to neckties. Red is a symbol of easy playfulness and it broadcasts vigor. The world of advertising knows this and is filled with red, both as a packaging color and in typography. Half the magazine covers are dominated by red, and then there are national flags, Santa Claus's suit, and Christmas decorations. In nature red fruits and flowers always seem to be the heartiest.

The ability to communicate mood is a characteristic of many colors, and red, I think, has more connotations than any other. These connotations have a great influence on personal taste in interior decoration. There are some strong prejudices against red in rooms. Some people with red-wagon memories may think bright red is a color for childrens' rooms. Others consider it a color best confined to public spaces: the carpet in the first-class lounge at an airport or the lobbies of some big hotel chain. Another turn of mind might find red entirely too ecclesiastical for domestic use. Visions of the minister's study or a Victorian vicarage or—even more extreme—of being in church. Oddly enough, the red that appears to be a sacred color to many people can have the opposite, profane implication when used differently. Crimson flocked wallpaper, for example, is synonymous with saloons and brothels.

Finally there is the most deeply rooted of all color prejudices against red and that is its historical association with royalty. Red velvet and ermine (purple is Roman), like the bedroom of Josephine at Malmaison. The history of red and royalty is amazing. As a child, I found it simply unbelievable that Louis XIV could have taken the time and trouble to worry about the scarlet heels of his shoes, much less be concerned with preventing others from having heels of the same color. And aren't throne rooms always red? If you go through some palaces, especially those in Austria, *every single room* seems to be done up in red. The bias against regal red is sometimes a distaste for those hopelessly rich and ambitious magnates of the last century who aped the aristocratic worlds they didn't belong to, making red interiors a symbol of everything wrong with Victorian decoration.

So there is a problem. People who disdain red for interior decoration do

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I like doing creative things. For the holidays I design my own greeting cards, and make clay dolls with faces and sew clothes for them. When music comes on the radio I just start improvising my own dances. Dennis gave me some German chocolates. He wants me to play tennis with him, and I think he's awfully good since he wants to be as famous as Boris Becker. He's very cute, too, but I've had a boyfriend since I was born. Maybe we'll meet again when I'm grown-up and an actress.

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The red I love almost better than any other is a deep, soft Venetian red

not usually think it is an ugly color. To them it is an unusable color. But that has changed a lot in the past couple of decades, and the marvelous possibilities of red in the color schemes of houses seems to me to be more and more appreciated. Because red is such a strong color and tends to dominate, it is important to map out its use if you intend to use a lot of it. And using a lot of red is what we are talking about.

To begin with, red is a terrific color for entrance halls. There are a number of fairly clear reasons for this. Even if you are one of those people who cannot relax in an atmosphere of strong color, passing through a brilliantly decorated hallway can be very pleasant. Another reason I love red halls is the (usual) absence of windows, which often makes hallways very dark, and dark rooms are wonderful when they are painted red. A lot of people tend to think you should try to lighten up a dark space with light paint. Well, the way to lighten up a dark space is with electricity. If you simply paint a gloomy room a light color, you usually end up with a dim gray room, whereas if you paint a dark space a rich lush red, its darkness can take on a shadowy inviting warmth. Darkness itself isn't bad.

A red entrance hall also makes a good, strong central focus from which other colors can radiate. Red goes with an enormous number of other colors and it often exists in the printed carpets and materials that you might be using elsewhere. Demonstrating the adaptability of red is one of the most famous present-day red rooms, which isn't actually red at all. Two of the walls are white and the other two are red and green and black printed cotton. It belongs to Diana Vreeland, who commissioned Billy Baldwin to do it many years ago. It is the embodiment of red as a color that can tolerate many other supposedly warring shades of itself in close company. Every possible kind of red flower and object just settles right in and looks completely at home. Another fashion goddess, Elsa Schiaparelli, had a room in Paris forty years ago that combined scarlet, claret, Chinese red, and cranberry red in a pleasantly bizarre way, cozy yet bold. Red is, after all, the color that means bravery.

If a red entrance hall doesn't appeal to you, how about a red dining room, in a range of coral that goes from lobster to melon? Coral red is undoubtedly a splendid color for a dining room. Flowers and porcelain, in addition to food colors, go so well with this kind of red. If your porcelain requires a pinker red, there are numberless shades that are equally lovely with flowers and linens and candlelight.

And now we come to perhaps the most fertile area for using red in the entire house: the library. All the decorative elements that are traditionally associated with libraries—books, old needlework, brass, and leather (think of all the stage sets you have seen)—are enhanced by many shades of red. The walls could be red with white woodwork and bookcases, and the insides of the bookcases could be painted the red of the walls. On the other hand, the entire room, trim and all, could be painted red. If you are very fortunate, you might possess mahogany bookcases to stand against red walls. Or if you have natural wood paneling, you can bring in


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A COLORFUL TOWEL AND RUG COLLECTION. Towels in solids, textures, and fancies of 100% cotton.

Coral is undoubtedly a splendid color for a dining room. Flowers and porcelain, in addition to food colors, go so well with this kind of red

red curtains and quite a bit of red upholstery. Old leather blends beautifully with red tones. Sporting pictures are superb on red walls or hung in the vicinity of red. And Oriental carpets are often seen at their best with a lot of red to complement them.

By the way, if you have a great fondness for a particular type of Oriental rug and have not yet found the one you want (or can afford), it is very easy and reliable to go ahead and plan the room around some future carpet of a particular sort. The dyes of such rugs, although full of natural variations, remain constant within the general tonal range of the individual type—Ushak, Tabriz, Sultanabad, and Kirman, to name a few examples. I have often painted and installed rooms for people who love Heriz carpets but who don't have the one they want. When the right one eventually turns up, it invariably fits in with the brick reds and blues and oyster whites selected in anticipation. In the illustration, claret red velvet and an ancient leather Chesterfield sofa are seen on an Agra carpet. I cannot remember ever seeing an Agra carpet that would not go with claret reds.

The red that I love almost better than any other and that is perfect for libraries or living rooms or any areas where red seems right is a deep, soft Venetian red or Pompeian red or whatever you want to call it. This warm terra-cotta red of old frescoes and Chinese lacquers goes more beautifully with the disparate elements of decoration than any other color. It is an easy-going background for books, pictures, needlework, Oriental porcelain, and lacquer of all sorts. It is also ravishing with any gilt bronze or gold leaf.

Particular reds create particular identifiable atmospheres. There is a kind of rusty, oxblood paint—was it *really* once made with the blood of the ox?—that can be counted on to convey a Colonial, New England, Shaker message. To this earthy red add a little homespun and some indigo blue and you can't miss, if an early American mood is what you want.

Cerise is as formal as oxblood red is informal. For that broad range of Empire, Duncan Phyfe, and Classical Revival, no other color is as expressive as this brilliant cherry red, especially if you use a lot of gold trimmings. The Red Room at the White House is the operative case in point.

Choosing a red is one thing, achieving it is another. I am always fascinated by the properties of certain colors that make them impossible to realize in some media and easy in others. Reds are *very* varied. You can produce a Chinese red, for instance, equally easily in straight paint or in a glaze or in a fabric. The same thing can be said of Venetian red. Deep rosy reds, however, often require glazing if you want to paint them on a wall. If they are attempted in straight paint, they become overly dark and muddy and lifeless; they do not work when they are opaque. Glazes, by comparison, are transparent, and when applied over the opaque undercoat, they create a subtle, soft, lively appearance.

Where is red not good? It's an interesting question and the two rooms that come to mind are kitchens and bedrooms. I have a friend who thought she wanted a red bedroom and realized she had never seen one. As an experiment, she painted one wall red—the wall opposite the bed. After waking up to it for a few days, she saw clearly that a red bedroom was not going to work. The reason for this (and it applies to kitchens as well) is that red is not a good color with the atmosphere of morning, whether one is thinking of the delicate light or of the relative fragility of people beginning their day.

Though it is not a good morning color, one can surely say that red is the very best nighttime color. In the glow of sunset or the last embers in the fireplace, with candles burning and a bunch of red flowers against a deep red wall, whether you are alone with a book or entertaining friends, the warmth and coziness of a red room are incomparable. □



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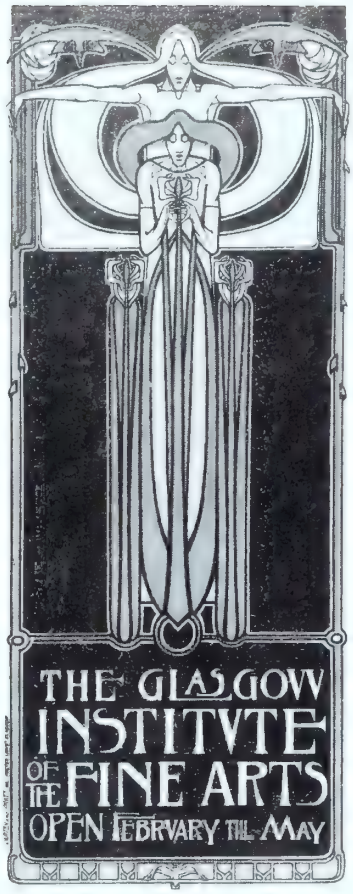
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ARTFUL PRESENTS

By Alexander Cockburn



ITALIAN GARDENS
OF THE RENAISSANCE
by J. C. Shepherd and G. A. Jellicoe
Princeton Architectural Press
118 pp., $45

A handsome reissue of the famous classic. The foreword catches the spirit of the original adventure: "At the latter end of July 1923 two fifth-year students of the Architectural Association in London invited their year-master . . . to tea at the adjoining Plane Tree restaurant in Great Russell Street . . . to seek advice for some specialist study as an anchor to a year's tour of Europe. Should it be cathedrals, piazzas or what? The year-master suggested over scones an architectural appraisal of Italian gardens might be fruitful. . . . The proposal was adopted. The students, armed with drawing board, paper, instruments, and camera, set forth early in September . . ."



FOLLIES: A NATIONAL TRUST GUIDE
by Gwyn Headley and Wim Meulenkamp
Jonathan Cape, 564 pp., £ 15

"What is a folly?" the authors ask and duly answer, "Ideally, it should be a big, Gothick, ostentatious, over-ambitious and useless structure. . . ." Not all British follies are Gothick and precisely how they may be categorized can be discovered in this National Trust guide. Like vernacular architecture in general, the folly is a creative cry from the amateur heart and should be treasured accordingly. The folly could only really flourish in Britain, where hidebound tradition made eccentric frolics seem truly mad.

Left: A poster by Mackintosh and McNair, c. 1896.
Below: Working a stallion at Blommerod, Sweden.
Above right: Villa d'Este, Lake Como.



ART NOUVEAU, 1870–1914
by Jean-Paul Bouillon
Skira/Rizzoli, 247 pp., $40

This tale has been told before, more than once, and it has been illustrated too, but Jean-Paul Bouillon's survey—from Van der Velde through *Ver Sacrum* to the Paris World's Fair and beyond—is patient and useful and the illustrations are of good quality. Someone should reissue Voysey's watersnake wallpaper, published in *The Studio* in 1896, though perhaps not for the nursery.

CÉZANNE
by John Rewald
Abrams, 288 pp., $67.50

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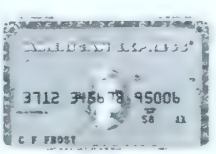
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apparatus criticus is thorough, and photographs make possible a diverting comparison of the artist's subject matter and his paintings. Above all, there is the chronicle of the long friendship and correspondence with Émile Zola, which went right back to those early days in the Provençal school where burly young Cézanne protected a sickly émigré from Paris and forged a lifetime's loyalties.

THE VILLAS OF PALLADIO
Text by Vincent Scully
Photographs by Philip Trager
New York Graphic Society Books/
Little, Brown, 167 pp., $45

VENETIAN VILLAS
Text by Michelangelo Muraro
Photographs by Paolo Marton
Rizzoli, 518 pp., $65

Philip Trager's black-and-white photographs of Palladio's villas in the Veneto have been quite properly acclaimed. Their justice to history, sense of place, refinement in perceiving theme and detail are beyond reproach. *The Villas of Palladio* is in consequence a fine document, decorated with a textual commentary by Vincent Scully and an introduction by Michael Graves. The Villa Pisani, the Villa Godi, and the others shimmer on the page with a strength that points from the Renaissance directly to the heart of the twentieth-century International Style.

Without the benefit of Trager's exhilarating photographs, *Venetian Villas* is a pleasant voyage through the same material, with fuller historical commentary.

ROGER VERGÉ'S ENTERTAINING IN THE FRENCH STYLE
Text by Roger Vergé
Photographs by Pierre Hussenat
Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 318 pp., $45

LEE BAILEY'S GOOD PARTIES: FAVORITE FOOD, TABLEWARE, KITCHEN EQUIPMENT, AND MORE, TO MAKE ENTERTAINING A BREEZE
by Lee Bailey
Clarkson N. Potter, 176 pp., $19.95

The redoubtable French chef presents menus along with advice on settings, wine, and so forth. Vergé really seems to like food, quite aside from making his living at it, and this zest comes through. There are some enticing potato dishes, and a chicken with figs looks interesting. This is as much decoration as guide, but one of the better ones in the genre. From this side of the Atlantic, Lee Bailey fires back a salvo. Like Vergé's, this is also total-menus stuff, with counsel about settings.

THE CITY AS A WORK OF ART: LONDON-PARIS-VIENNA
by Donald J. Olsen
Yale, 341 pp., $35

A stimulating essay, copiously illustrated, on the nineteenth-century development of London, Paris, and Vienna, showing the civic and aesthetic calculations that produced these three great bourgeois cities. Professor Olsen draws morals for our time and skewers the antihistorical and antihuman artificers of our own urban condition. He wears his learning comfortably and his points are well taken.

AMERICAN ART DECO
by Alastair Duncan
Abrams, 288 pp., $49.50

For a coruscating sense of the exuberance of the period, turn to pages 154 and 155, which display the view of the proscenium fire curtain of the Avalon Theater on Catalina Island, commissioned by William Wrigley Jr. and designed by John Gabriel Beckman. There are other such treasures in this handsome book, notably in the architecture and carpet sections. Alastair Duncan's survey is knowledgeable.

IN AN IRISH GARDEN
by Sybil Connolly and Helen Dillon
Harmony, 160 pp., $40

THE GARDENS OF IRELAND
Text by Patrick Bowe
Photographs by Michael George
Little, Brown, 192 pp., $35

Weather has not been kind to Ireland lately. The summer before last was one of the worst of the century and this last one wasn't so good either. But as alternatives to the sullen downpour, here are a couple of charming surveys of that soft and fragrant thing, the Irish garden. The first is a pleasant collection of 27 Irish gardens, ranging from Glenveagh Castle to Mrs. Nancy Minchin's delightful garden in Knockna-Garry, County Cork. As already suggested, there's no sight so soothing as a well-tended Irish garden smiling bravely through the rain, and Sybil Connolly and Helen Dillon, along with



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And finally, after every foot-Lambert, mega-tz and decibel was measured, scrutinized and alyzed, it all went back to the technical editor at eo Review who summed it up.

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The Gardens of Ireland manages to find a mostly different set and outlines their history in a well-informed and well-written manner. Thus equipped, along with Bord Failte's list of recommended B&Bs, the assiduous traveler has nothing to fear.

NDEBELE: THE ART OF AN AFRICAN TRIBE
by Margaret Courtney-Clarke
Rizzoli, 203 pp., $45

The Transvaal Ndebele settled near Pretoria at the start of the seventeenth century and, about 400,000 in number, have maintained the customs and language of their ancestors. Most lately, as eloquently described in this book by its author, Margaret Courtney-Clarke, and the writer of its foreword, David Goldblatt, the South African government has attempted to herd the Ndebele into a "homeland" of worthless desert, KwaNdebele, from which the wretched denizens must travel inordinate distances to find work. But even here the Ndebele women continue with their extraordinary house decoration and beadwork. Both are intimately connected with the rituals and myths of their tribe. This book is a remarkable political and cultural document.

OUT OF THE SIXTIES
by Dennis Hopper
Twelve Trees, 128 pp., $40

ALICE SPRINGS: PORTRAITS
Twelve Trees, 112 pp., $40.

"These are my photos," writes Dennis Hopper in his attractive foreword. "I started at 18 taking pictures. I stopped at 31. I'm 50 now. They represent the years from 25–31, 1961–67. . . . I directed *Easy Rider* at 31. . . . They were the only creative outlet I had for these years until *Easy Rider*. I never carried a camera again." Too bad he didn't really, because these photographs are strongly evocative of a period in a manner both unforced and innocent, unlike the more self-conscious nostalgic albums. If Hopper's are pure sixties, Alice Springs's collection of portraits has the surer sheen of a later and less alluring time, and if the work is technically superior to Hopper's, the zeitgeist is a lot chillier.

SÜLEYMANNAME:
THE ILLUSTRATED HISTORY
OF SÜLEYMAN THE MAGNIFICENT
by Esin Atil
National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C./
Abrams, 271 pp., $75

Arifi was the sixteenth-century historian of the Ottoman Empire. Favored by Süleyman the Magnificent, he produced five volumes of which the fifth, the Süleymanname, is the only intact volume preserved in its original library in the Topkapi Palace. It covers events from 1520 to 1555, has 30,000 verses and 69 beautiful and historically valuable paintings. These have been reproduced in this volume to coincide with a traveling exhibition opening at the National Gallery in February.

THE MAJESTIC WORLD OF
ARABIAN HORSES
by William L. Pereira Jr.
Abrams, 216 pp., $60

The cult of the Arabian horse goes back in myth to Solomon and extends forward to the approximately 100,000 owners of Arabian horses in the U.S. alone. William Pereira does a *tour d'horizon* of the state of Arabian horse breeding today, with profiles of the bigwigs in the business. He knows what he's talking about and Martin Schreiber's photographs counterpoint these discursive feats.

THE GREAT BOOK OF
POST-IMPRESSIONISM
by Diane Kelder
Abbeville, 383 pp., $85

Those with carpal tunnel syndrome shouldn't try lifting this one up: a heavily illustrated history of the Post-Impressionist schools. Here are the Nabis, the Fauves, Die Brücke throwing up their colors. The reproductions are good.

AMERICAN WATERCOLORS
by Christopher Finch
Abbeville, 312 pp., $85

An elegantly produced overview of American watercolors, with chapters devoted to Homer, Sargent, Marin, and the later schools. The full-page reproductions of Homer and Marin are fine and the text is useful. □



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1

THE FRENCH CHRISTMAS

Grandes bouffes and improbable family reunions are the order of the day

By Jane Kramer



The Christmas table at the La Fertés': a crusty fougasse with candles, ivy, and berries, colored Venetian goblets with beads and small bouquets.

ALEXANDRE BAILHACHE

There is one Paris Christmas my family agrees on, and that is Christmas dinner at our neighbors Isabelle and Michel de La Ferté. I see from last year's menu that it is really a classic French meal, a feast in the grand manner—the kind of meal that in anybody else's hands would be solemn. *Foie gras d'Alsace. Huîtres. Boudin blanc truffé. Oie tiède aux pommes et marrons. Céleri-rave puré. Salade de mesclun. Vacherin aux framboises.* And plum pudding that has been steeped in old port and Armagnac since August. (The wines began with a Château de Malle 1974 and went on to a Meursault Clos de la Barre 1979, a Château Paveil de Luze 1975, and, finally, a Champagne Deutz Blanc de Blancs 1979.) But there is nothing solemn about Christmas dinner at the La Fertés'. Isa- is a painter. Her pictures are wit- of detail and surprise, and so is the Christmas table she sets in the *bois clair* kitchen for her family and friends. Her linen is a deep-red patterned cloth, a trompe-l'oeil of the kind of neo-Egyptian rug that French Orientalists used to put in their paintings. Her crystal is old Venetian glass—red and blue and purple goblets, dabbed with gold, from a great-aunt of Michel's who married a Foscari and spent the rest of her life in a big pink-and-ocher palazzo on the Grand Canal—and she likes to fill them with ropes of colored beads, for table favors. Her flowers are pale, pale roses—there are roses on the sideboard, at the windows, next to every plate. Her centerpiece is a crusty fougasse holding dozens of long, thin candles and scattered with ivy and berries and ornaments. There are red bells and golden balls and Christmas candies, and there are oranges and pineapples and grapes spilling out of shallow silver bowls like cornucopias. There are so many enchanting things on the La Fertés' table that the goose ends up in a corner, balanced on its platter on a kitchen chair.

Most Christmases in France are not like that at all. For one thing, they are relentlessly familial—friends are not invited. They are gatherings of the tribe, rites to reassure the French that however regularly they invent the new novel or the new wave or the new philosophy, they belong to a France Profonde that is irrevocable and enduring but only occasionally amusing. Every foreigner I know here has a story that begins, "The loneliest Christmas I ever spent . . ." or "The saddest Christmas

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His father, a Protestant from Alsace, wanted to start dinner with Alsatian *foie gras d'oie,* and his mother, a Catholic from Les Landes, wanted to start with Landais *foie gras de canard*

was the year . . ." and that has to do with being alone in Paris at Christmastime, deserted by a lover or a school chum or a dearest friend who has suddenly disappeared to a damp family house somewhere in the country for a week with relatives he spends the rest of the year avoiding. Of course, France is a Latin country, and in Latin countries Christmas is not the serious sacred event that Easter is, or Good Friday. The French will go to mass on Christmas Eve and put out a crèche for the children, but to a foreigner they seem less interested in celebrating the birth of Christ than in eating in a manner "appropriate," as they see it, to the birth of Christ. To that end, they solemnly eat more good food, and spend more money on that good food, than a prudent Frenchman would ever otherwise think of eating *or* spending. The Christmas *bouffe* is, so to speak, a spiritual imperative.

In the provinces—where all good French grandmothers live—Christmas Eve, or Réveillon, means supper *en famille*, followed by church, followed by cake and hot chocolate for the children. Christmas Day is more like a charity banquet, to which all one's stray relations are invited—maiden aunts and dim nephews and impoverished cousins and whatever clerics the family has managed to produce. Parisians are divided as to whether the *bouffe* should come on Réveillon or Christmas Day, but once it is negotiated, the menu is sacred and only a real upset in the balance of family power—death or, worse, divorce—can change it. Our friend Olivier—the oldest child of a kind of marriage-merger between a French Protestant banking clan and a French Catholic banking clan—spent his first four Christmases in tears because his father, who was a Protestant from Alsace, wanted to start dinner with Alsatian *foie gras d'oie* and his mother, who



A turn-of-the-century Venetian goblet from Murano is to the right of an antique etched French decanter.

was a Catholic from Les Landes, wanted to start with Landais *foie gras de canard,* and by the time they actually sat down to eat, all the relatives would be shouting at one another. It was only in Olivier's fifth year that the menu was established. Christmas dinner began with *foie gras de canard,* which his maternal grandmother carried from Les Landes in sealed gray pots, but it ended with a hot English marmalade pudding, a gesture to the North and to a proper Protestant world where the food, like the people, was straightforward and substantial. Marmalade pudding, to Olivier's father's mind, was a symbol of all that Europe could produce if it shook off popery.

Olivier says that in his house *every* holiday was a sort of Thirty Years War. His Catholic mother, for example, wanted to give him big chocolate eggs on Easter morning, whereas his Protestant father insisted that he hunt for his eggs—which were only hardboiled eggs anyway and of no interest at all once the hunt is over. But the real battles were at Christmas. Protestant children, Olivier's father claimed, made use of Père Noël until a suitable age and then dismissed him with bracing stoicism. On the other hand, Olivier's mother believed that a child who was encouraged to lose his faith in Père Noël was likely to lose his faith in the Enfant Jésus too—and therefore no one was allowed to disabuse Olivier of the idea of Santa Claus until Olivier was thirteen and even his mother's confessor protested that Olivier's "blessed innocence" was a little peculiar. Actually Olivier was not at all distressed to give up Père Noël. What distressed him then—and horrifies him today—is the thought of any adjustments in his Christmas menu. Once the matter of foie gras was settled at his parents' house, Christmas dinner was, so to speak, frozen. It was, and remains, *foie gras de canard,* roast capon with chestnut puree, chestnut dressing, and whole braised chestnuts on the side, and marmalade pudding flamed in brandy. That, with some embellishments, is what most French people eat at Christmas time—except that the correct dessert happens to be a *bûche de Noël* sprouting sugar or marzipan mushrooms.

The important thing, in the end, is that Christmas dinner cost a fortune. It is supposed to engage the French in a sense of their own largesse—a refreshing and entirely uncharacteristic sensation—as befits the holiday. It is supposed to suggest good will and treats for the children and free scraps for the dog at the butcher, although it is *not* supposed to suggest that this good will is anything but seasonal or that there has been a revolution in the national character. Everybody, for instance,

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buys foie gras, usually goose foie gras, at Christmas. Even the bums and bag ladies in my neighborhood line up at the *traiteur* on Christmas Eve for their slice of foie gras, counting out the price in ten- and twenty-centime pieces. The pilgrims making a Christmas pilgrimage to Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal on the rue du Bac will stop at Hédiard, which is practically next door, so that they can go home with a small piece of the saint in one hand and a piece of goose liver in the other. Now that everyone in France seems to be eating expensive foie gras for Christmas dinner, some people are beginning to look around for substitutes that are even more expensive and more spectacular. The avenue Foch crowd, which worries about this sort of thing, has apparently taken to starting its Christmas dinner with caviar, but the avenue Foch crowd is considered ostentatious in my Left Bank neighborhood. People in my neighborhood seem to have resolved the potlatch problem by having their caviar on Christmas Eve and saving the simple pleasures of foie gras for Christmas Day. The last Paris Réveillon we went to was a buffet supper with blinis and caviar and pepper vodka. The grownups were happy. The children managed by taking a little sugar and cinnamon, turning their blinis into crepes, and stuffing themselves.

Obviously the best Paris Christmases are the ones where no one is arguing about the provenance of the foie gras or discussing the price of caviar or the relative merits of capon and turkey. Capon is so expensive here that it can cost what amounts to over a hundred dollars to buy a bird for eight for your Christmas table. No one knows if capon is in reality expensive or if, with its reputation as the bird of choice for Christmas dinner, it simply became expensive to fit the holiday mentality. No one in France—chatelaine or concierge—would think of serving a capon on any other occasion. Capons are totems here, objects of nostalgia, like old valentines. Grown men and women talk tearfully about the *chapons* their grandmothers used to serve for Christmas in the country and about how it is impossible, even at eight hundred francs at the Boucherie Mère-Clos, to buy a bird as succulent and tasty as grandmother's country capon used to be. My Paris friends are shocked to learn that I buy capons in New York for eight or ten dollars and actually stuff them and serve them for less money than it takes to put a piece of veal on the table, and nearly as much as it costs to buy a leek if I want to make chicken

What distressed
him then—
and horrifies him
today—
is the thought of
any adjustments
in his
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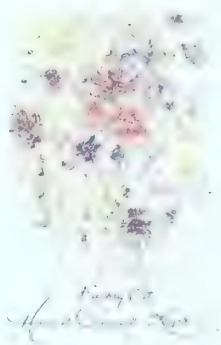
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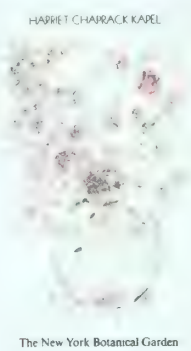


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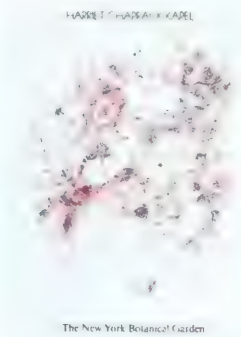


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Not many children like foie gras or for that matter oysters

soup with the carcass. The same is true of French turkey. Turkey, being another Christmas bird, is just as serious a purchase, pound for pound, as capon. It is considered a delicacy and a great treat—though in Italy, next door, people eat it all the time. A couple of Paris Christmases ago, my husband announced that he did not really like turkey very much, having had to eat it twice a week at least in the army, and now our friends are convinced that boot camp in the 1960s in America included three meals a day at some Auberge de l'Ill in the New Jersey swamps. The French are much less solemn about turkey once they have been to America themselves, especially if they have been there for Thanksgiving and had a turkey dinner that was timed, cooked, and served around a football game. My friends Christian and Dominique, who are publishers and travel a lot, put together a fine Christmas dinner out of the foods they like best from other peoples' holidays, including most importantly a Thanksgiving turkey with cranberry sauce and New England bread, sage and sausage stuffing, but also Greek dips, Lebanese tabbouleh, Italian wedding ices, Vietnamese eggrolls, and Chinese quail eggs.

It is hard for anyone raised in New England, as I was, to be truly satisfied with a Paris Christmas. The beauty of Paris is not a winter beauty. The city is wet, when it should be clear and cold with a coat of snow. The children sneeze. There is not enough red in their cheeks, not enough ice on their mittens, none of the right hot-cold winter wooly smells about them. They do not go caroling, and the only church with a proper choir is Saint-Eustache over near Les Halles. Not many children like foie gras or for that matter oysters or truffled veal sausages. They like homemade caramels and ribbons of Christmas candy. My daughter's idea of a perfect Christmas dinner is roast beef and Yorkshire pudding, and her one concession to the French menu is *bûche de Noël,* provided it comes from Mulot, a baker in the neighborhood known for the quantity of his chocolate frosting. Our own Paris Christmas dinner actually begins as it does at home—first thing in the morning with the stocking candy. It continues through coffee and cakes and pastries at the tree and on to eggnog at noon, and only when all the presents are unwrapped and the visiting is over does it move into the kitchen, where the cooking properly begins. Most Parisians I know consider our Christmas an exotic but unnervingly imprecise affair. Olivier, for one, says that French parents would never encourage their children to hang stockings from the fireplace, because people who think logically, as French children are supposed to do, know very well that Père Noël would not waste precious time squeezing down chimneys, getting sooty in the process, when he could easily use doors or windows on his rounds—and therefore would have no reason to be anywhere near a fireplace with his sack of packages. Olivier is not happy about the fact that Père Noël comes down our chimney. He thinks that, as parents, we are pedagogic disasters, so we refrain from telling him that Père Noël not only arrives by chimney but also fills a stocking with Swiss cheese, ground chuck, and biscuits for our dog, Romeo. □


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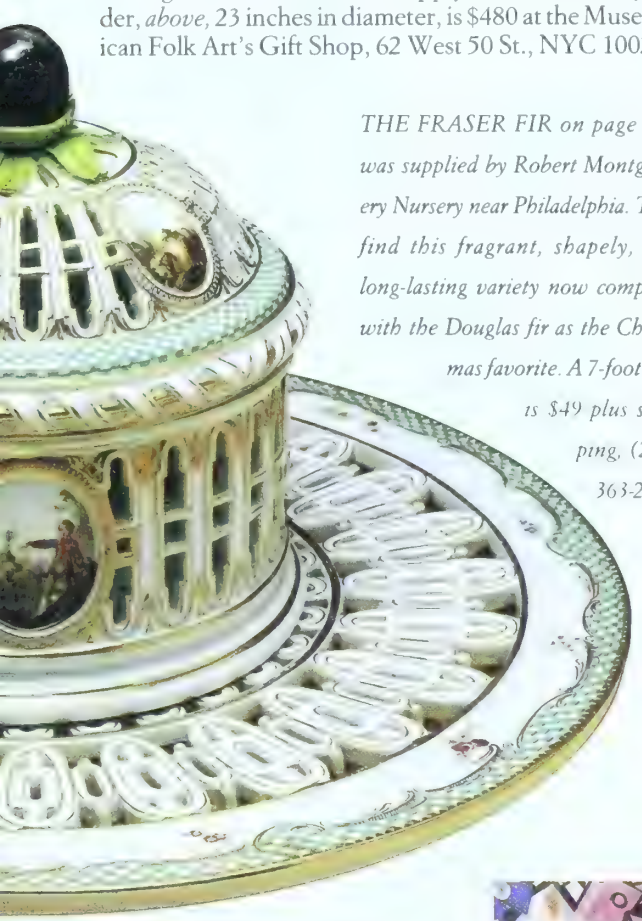
CHOICE

What's new, what's noteworthy



REVIVAL RUG

The renewed interest in hooked rugs followed the quilt craze, but old rugs are in much shorter supply. This new one by Tia Alexander, *above,* 23 inches in diameter, is $480 at the Museum of American Folk Art's Gift Shop, 62 West 50 St., NYC 10020.



THE FRASER FIR on page 117 was supplied by Robert Montgomery Nursery near Philadelphia. They find this fragrant, shapely, and long-lasting variety now competes with the Douglas fir as the Christmas favorite. A 7-foot tree is $49 plus shipping, (215) 363-2477.

MEISSEN TREASURES

The Meissen Shop, on one of America's outstanding shopping streets, Worth Avenue in Palm Beach, believes it is the only one in the world specializing exclusively in antique Meissen. The c.-1780 centerpiece, *above,* a covered bowl on stand, has an overall height of 7½ inches; $6,550 the pair. *Left:* A 3⅛-inch-long c.-1750 box with gilt mounts at $5,550. For information, (305) 832-2504.





A DELICATE BALANCE

A table lamp of brass with a brushed satin finish, *right,* stands nearly 2 feet high. Designed by Juergen Riehm, the lamp has a gently curved arm 27 inches long which balances an adjustable copper ball opposite the shaded low-voltage halogen bulb. Moving the ball toward the central axis tilts the light source down. On special order for $380 from 1100 Architects, (212) 226-5833.



ARCHITECT'S TABLE DESIGN IN MAHOGANY AND STEEL

Alan Buchsbaum's new dining table, *above,* called Wintour in honor of his friend Anna (editor-in-chief of British *Vogue*), is as soigné as its namesake. Frame and legs are sandblasted ebonized mahogany, the top patinated sheet steel. By Ecart, through Furniture of the Twentieth Century, New York, at $6,500 for the 6′ 6″ length, $7,400 for the 8′ 2″. Stool by Pierre Chareau.



ARTISTS' GIFTWRAPS

No one will carelessly rip open packages wrapped in the pull-out papers from the new Abrams series *Giftwraps by Artists, left.* Each volume contains sixteen different patterns reproduced on 18¾-by-27-inch sheets—from the English designer William Morris, the painter Raoul Dufy, the Wiener Werkstätte, and 18th- and 19th-century Japanese kimonos. $16.95 each at bookstores.

RUG: GIFTWRAPS; JEFF MCNAMARA

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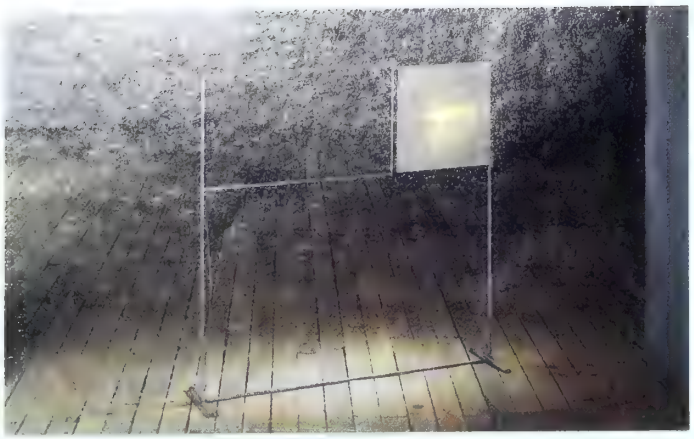
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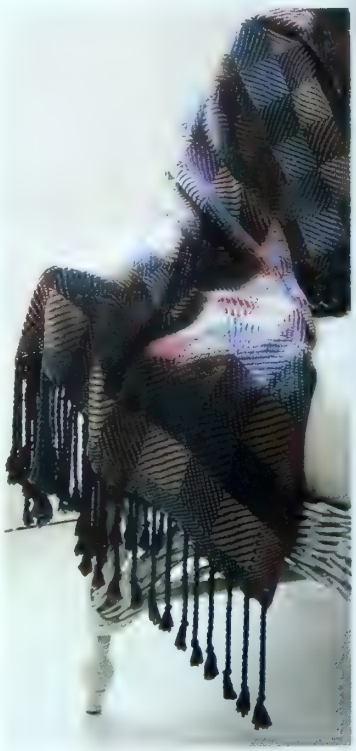
The Screen Light, *left,* 40 inches high and 40 inches wide, was introduced this fall in interior designer Kevin Walz's first furniture collection. Designed for ambient light and best placed against a wall, the fixture has a sandblasted steel frame. Stainless-steel and coppered-bronze mesh screens over an incandescent bulb give moiré effect. $395 at the Gallery of Applied Arts, 24 West 57 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019; (212) 765-3560.

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THIS YEAR'S PET PILLOWS

Hand-painted portraits on luxurious but durable silk crepe de chine, *left,* will win the hearts of dog lovers. Made to order in any size, color, and breed, the down-stuffed pillows start at $850 for a 21-inch square (the King Charles spaniel here) and are produced in two to three weeks. Cover zips off easily for dry cleaning. The pillows are edged with hand-knotted silk trimmings. At Charlotte Moss, 131 East 70 Street, New York, N.Y. 10021; (212) 473-9405.



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GREEN THOUGHTS EVERY DAY

There is a gardening calendar for every enthusiast east of the Mississippi on Starwood Publishing's 1987 list. Three editions, *right,* cover the mid-Atlantic, Southeast, and Northeast zones, each containing twelve color plates representing the gardens of the particular region plus monthly advice on what and when to plant, prune, and feed in that area. Each page includes chore suggestions and garden highlights. $9.95 at bookstores, or



LIGHT, TOM VACK; OTHERS, JEFF McNAMARA

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CLOCK: Fine George I tallcase clock with original painted decoration, by Wm. Stephens, circa 1730.

PAINTING: English School painting of fighting cocks in a landscape, circa 1840.

CHAIR: George III "Rustik" elm and oak armchair, circa 1780.

LION: One from a pair of Italian Eighteenth Century marble lions on plinths, circa 1780.





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THE QUIET ISLE OF KORČULA

By Charles Maclean

Around noon the boat from Venice, one of those sleek white liners which twice a week make their leisurely way down the coast of Yugoslavia, enters the Korčulanski Kanal, a deep-water channel that separates Korčula from the peninsular mainland. A blast of the ship's siren dislodges a colony of seabirds from a dark-colored promontory and sends them wheeling out over the sparkling blue Adriatic.

Because of its dense pine forests, the Greeks called it Korkyra Melaina, or Black Korčula: from the sea this greenest, most thickly wooded of Dalmatian islands still has the duskish allure of landfall in a Homeric tale. The salt air turns sweet suddenly with the drowsy scent of the maquis. As the liner glides by under the high windows of the Dominican monastery and church of St. Nichola, sentinels to Korčula harbor since the fifteenth century, passengers move up on deck for their first sight of the old town.

It looks as if it had emerged whole from the sea, a miniature walled city formed on a rounded peninsula, fortified with battlements and ramparts and four bleached towers whose foundations stand in deep clear water. Above the walls a gradual pyramid of stone houses crowded together under red, pink, and yellow roofs rises toward the bell tower of a Romanesque cathedral, which like a ship's crow's nest commands the sea-lanes of the Korčulan archipelago.







Nearer to the town one is struck by the variety of architectural styles woven into the rough symmetry of its design: from medieval to early Renaissance, from Baroque to the palm-lined Italianate front of the Hotel Korčula. Everywhere the eye is drawn by contrast. Some of the older houses, not the grand patrician palaces but the houses of merchants interested in displaying their wealth, break out into ornate balconies and Gothic loggias. Others, relics of the plague years when half of Korčula was burned to cleanse it of contagion, have remained ruins, roofless shells with vines and fig trees waving from their vacant windows.

Yet the effect of the whole is one of harmony. A line of washing stretched between a Renaissance console and a TV antenna billows above a narrow street. There's no hint of the museum here, nothing false or precious about the way of life. Korčulans have always adapted their town to the existential needs of its people.

Walking up the main street—wheeled traffic is not allowed in the old town—one comes to the narrow, intimate square in front of St. Mark's Cathedral. Surrounded by the noble façades of churches and palaces—"deliberations in stone on the nature of piety and pleasure," as Rebecca West described them—old women gossip in the shade and children play football over white stone flags worn smooth as marble by the centuries.

Top: St. Mark's Cathedral.
Center: The port with the citadel. *Left:* A view of the town of Korčula.

TOP, CENTER, PETER BAKER/FPG. OTHERS, CHARLES MACLEAN


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From the hills behind, an inland view of the town of Korčula

An air of civic grace, a peacefulness secured over a long history of fiercely defended independence make it easy to understand why people who live here consider themselves fortunate and why few visitors to this mellow, sun-drenched place can help falling under its spell.

Rebecca West came to Korčula in 1937 on the journey through Yugoslavia that inspired her impassioned, monumental work *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon.* In her own lofty way she fell in love with the island, convinced in the short time she spent there that she'd had a revelation about the Balkan Experience. With the son of an old patrician family who had the "great head and full body of a Renaissance cardinal" to act as her guide, she discovered the Korčulans' gift for enjoying even in times of hardship the kind of life she saw dying out in Europe under the dictators and their appeasers—a life of nobility, honest work, and spiritual independence, marked above all by the Slav quality of intensity that her guide seemed to personify.

I met the "Cardinal" years later, first came to Korčula as a child, uld hardly have recognized that wise, funny, but least intense of men from what may never have been a strong likeness. In turn, Dr. Arneri's memory of Rebecca West had faded. Or perhaps he simply preferred to talk about the more entertaining visit the previous year—summer 1936—of Edward VIII and Mrs. Simpson. It had been his duty to act as guide on that occasion too.

I remember him showing photographs of the yacht *Nahlin* docking at the quayside opposite the old Hôtel de Ville while two British destroyers (the "Nanny-boats," Lady Diana Cooper called them, herself along on the cruise as chaperone) stood guard in the channel. There were more photographs of the king and his duchess-to-be coming ashore to a receiving line and a tumultuous welcome by the people of Korčula, who greeted the couple with cries of "Živila ljubav!"—Serbo-Croatian for *Vive l'amour!*

"It delighted both of us," Wallis later confessed, "that strangers of uncomplicated hearts should wish us well." In Korčula morale was high and the king's mood very gay. The Cardinal remembered him declaring *grk,* a strong local wine, the finest he'd tasted in all Yugoslavia. Much taken with th island and its people, he hadn't ye lapsed into the fit of melancholy tha would spoil the rest of a fated cruise.

The historical interest of these vis its—by the writer who in *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon* made a supreme effort to understand the oncoming catastrophe of World War II and by a monarch who was constitutionally incapable of grasping its least implications and within months of his abdication would be taking tea with Hitler at Berchtesgaden, sheepishly acknowledging his host with a half-cocked Nazi salute—might seem purely incidental to anywhere as out-of-the-world or as rich in its own legends as Korčula. But it is remarkable how often this small Adriatic island has been swept by the storms and tides of European history.

From 1420 until the end of the eighteenth century Korčula was an outpost of the Republic of St. Mark. An emblematic lion gazes proudly from the medieval tower above the main entrance to the town. Before the Venetians, it had been occupied successively by Greeks, Byzantines, Goths, Avars, and Slavs, yet always managed to retain a surprising degree of autonomy. During the Napoleonic wars Korčula changed hands with almost comic regularity, the great powers of Austria, France, Russia, and Britain all bequeathing legacies of more or less doubtful value. But the island had long been secure enough in its own strong Dalmatian culture to assimilate outside influences without strain.

You can see that self-confidence today in the masterly work of Korčulan stonemasons; in the sturdy ships the islanders build; in a fiery performance of the Moreška, a sixteenth-century pageant from Spain now uniquely Korčulan; or even in the *serrodja,* danced on special occasions by the village of Smokvica and still just recognizable as that fulsome English reel the Sir Roger de Coverley. You can hear it too in the sea-born harmonies of Korčulan music and songs; in a tale of unexplained treasure like the fifteenth-century alabaster bas-reliefs in the tiny village church at Čara, which according to local legend floated in on a wave all the

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way from Nottingham; or in the story of Marco Polo, who, imprisoned by the Genoese for a year on Korčula in 1298, found time to dictate his notes on the Far East to a fellow prisoner, the scribe Rusticiano of Pisa. The great Venetian traveler, it is now believed—by all good Korčulans anyway—may actually have been born on the island and sailed forth on his voyages of discovery from Korčula harbor.

If you take a guided tour of the old town, you will certainly be shown the house where Marco Polo is said to have lived. You are also likely to have pointed out to you the house belonging to Fitzroy Maclean, a native Scot recently made an honorary citizen of Korčula. Although I haven't yet heard of anyone dancing the *serfitzroy,* his contribution as a foreigner to the island's history has gradually been absorbed into the mythology that continues to shape Korčula's destiny.

On a fall morning in 1943, Brigadier Maclean saw rising out of the misty Adriatic an "enchanted town like something from a fairy tale" and promised himself that if he lived out the war he would come back. Earlier that year he had parachuted into the mountains of enemy-occupied Bosnia to head the British military mission to Tito and the partisans. Despite the added liability of having Randolph Churchill and Evelyn Waugh along as junior officers, he managed to survive the hostilities and returned to Korčula for the first of many visits in 1960.

Then, as now, foreigners were not allowed to own property in Yugoslavia, but Tito wanted my father to have a continuing connection with the country and, in particular, the island he had helped to liberate. By a special dispensation, Tito made it possible for him to buy a house in the old town of Korčula.

A former palace of the Boschi family, the house stands in the lee of St. Mark's Cathedral. It looks out from a vine-shaded terrace over the town roofs to the sea and a chain of small islands flung out across the channel to the distant mountains of Pelješac. As palaces go its proportions are modest, but the plain sixteenth-century interior restored from an earlier ruin with rough wooden floors, white-limed walls, and fine stone architraves has the same air of simple splendor that characterizes much of the town.



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To spend any length of time there is to fall effortlessly into the rhythms of Korčulan life. A swim before breakfast from the rocks below the town walls, shopping early for the best buys from the fruit and vegetable market, going on a boat trip to a nearby island to fish and snorkel off some secluded beach, drinking *rakija* and the excellent local wines with friends at one of the town cafés, dining alfresco on the terrace under a canopy of stars—once the routine is established, it becomes difficult to break. Korčulans work hard, but they share a need to enjoy themselves that is infectious and a talent for friendship generous enough to make an honorary citizen of every visitor.

From Korčula the mainland of Yugoslavia is easily accessible. Two hours by boat to the south lies Dubrovnik, a grander, more cosmopolitan, more exquisite version of Korčula and perhaps the most beautiful small city in the world. The same boat will carry you north to Split, a sprawling modern town with its medieval heart still encased in the walls of the emperor Diocletian's palace, where Robert Adam came from Venice in 1757 to make a series of drawings that would inspire the best of Georgian architecture. You can travel inland to see the bridge at Mostar or go on expeditions to the idyllic out islands of Mljet and Lastovo. Only when you get back do you realize that all you've seen can be found on Korčula and that everywhere else something seemed to be missing.

For Rebecca West it was the "visibility of life," a hazily romantic notion of ancient simplicity which she felt was unique to Korčula. Impressed by the strength and vitality of the Korčulan people—by a "morning freshness of the body and soul that will have none of the dust"—and by the powerful hold that tradition had over them, she found it strange and "heartrending" to wander into a world where men were still men and women still women. Aside from her immediate fears of Germany invading Yugoslavia (it had already done so by the time her book was published), she was convinced that Korčula and, indeed, all of Dalmatia would in the long run be overwhelmed by the irresistible advance of our own debased Western culture.

Half a century later one can only say that it hasn't happened yet. From the sacrifices and the triumphs of the years of war and revolution, Korčula has emerged as part of the modern state of Yugoslavia with its unique character and independent spirit intact. Tourists, neatly packaged, mostly German, flock there by the thousands. Except during the hottest months of July and August when the island can seem overcrowded, they represent no real threat to what most Korčulans regard as their inalienable right to live as they always have done, or as they please. Few would deny that it is tourism now that pays for that privilege.

Something may have been lost, but Rebecca West's elegiacal view of the island as a forgotten corner of paradise that needed protecting (for whose benefit one wonders) from despoiling progress, seems a little misguided. There's always a sense of betrayal in writing about an island. But since Homeric times, when Circe is said to have lured Ulysses' men ashore to the golden beaches at Lumbarda, Korčula's magical power to attract has never depended on its remaining apart from the rest of the world, but on being a part of it on its own terms. □



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IS THERE A NEW ARCHITECTURE?

Theories from England and the U.S.

By Suzanne Stephens





Postmodern classicism comes up against New Spirit Modernism. *Left:* An East Hampton house by Robert A. M. Stern Architects. *Above:* The Alexander Julian shop, Dallas, by Moser and Goodwin, PYT, Inc.

Architectural movements can't change with the rapidity of *W*'s annual In and Out lists. But if you don't pay close attention, it may seem that in the same amount of time it takes *W* to decide that string beans are in and spinach is out a "new" architecture has arrived on the doorstep. For example, just when we thought the ashes of Modernism had been neatly tamped so that the Classical-style pediments and pilasters of Postmodernism could be erected, the "New Spirit" is said to be blowing all that away.

The New Spirit, according to the English periodical *The Architectural Review* of last August, represents a "renewed interest in space and movement, in the use of real materials." Where Postmodernism purported to [illegible] search for historically referential [illegible] redolent with "meaning," [illegible] crudely executed with paint and gypsum board—the New Spirit seeks to be more straightforward about the physical nature of its materials and structure, even if they comprise aluminum siding, chicken wire, and wood studs. *Architectural Review* writer E. M. Farrelly traces this movement's lineage back to Constructivism's "dynamic imagery," Futurism's "savage beauty," Dada's "randomness," and punk's rebelliousness. In other words, there is a lot that is old in the New Spirit.

Whether or not "Postmodernism is dead" and the New Spirit will take its place, as the *Review* proposes, remains to be seen. At the moment Postmodernism is very much alive on both sides of the Atlantic. And of its various strains, the most classicizing and traditional—not the one known for its ironic commentary or jokey pastiche—seems to be healthiest, mainly because of an enthusiastic and affluent clientele for which this architecture is only one element in a consumer-as-aristocrat lifestyle. Much of the tradition-oriented lifestyle among Americans is based on the English example, and as the English cultural commentator Peter York recently pointed out at Aspen's 1986 International Design Conference (this year on British influence), the English are only too happy to offer up a whole slew of ideas, examples, and products to satisfy this American appetite. Thus "The Treasure Houses of Britain"—the arts and furnishings exhibit at the National Gallery last year—*Masterpiece Theater,* Colefax & Fowler chintzes, Georgian silver, and Burberry raincoats—all doing their part to create the latter-day version of the life of the eighteenth-century country gentleman.

While the English upper-crust past

LEFT: LANGDON CLAY. RIGHT: WOLFGANG HOYT/ESTO

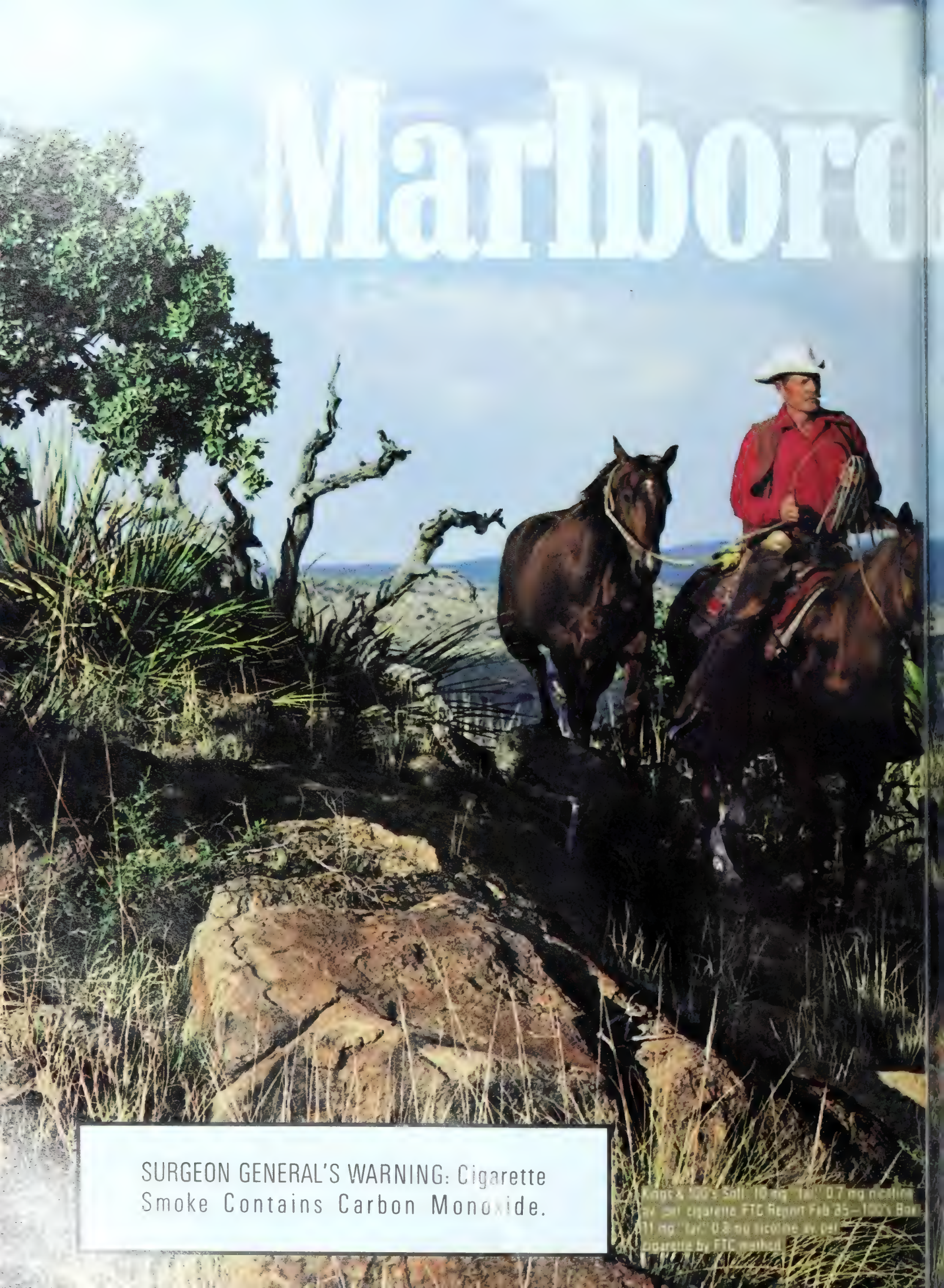
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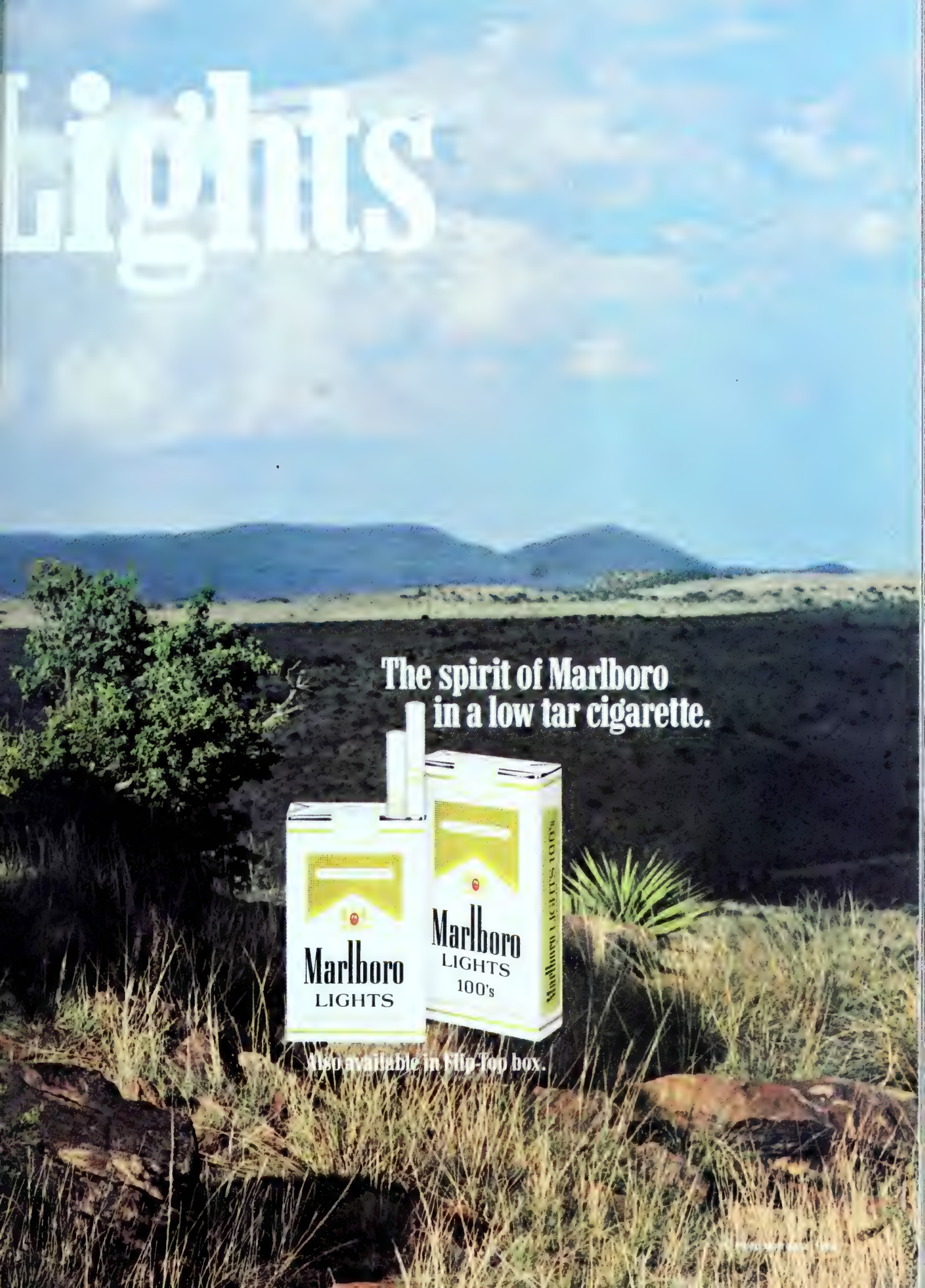


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Lends a certain cachet with upwardly mobile Americans, another part of English culture has been exported to a presumably younger audience. This second export is punk. According to York, "Punk represents the English vision of the future." Since the first traces of punk were made known to the American audience in the 1970s with English rock stars, York continued, British design as a whole has done very well by the punk style. Its hard-edged, casually violent design idiom has influenced—and been coopted by—not only fashion, film, and furniture but graphic design and architecture as well.

What York could not have elaborated upon was the catalytic connection that would be made between punk and architecture a little while later when E. M. Farrelly wrote on the New Spirit in *The Architectural Review*. The New Spirit fosters a tough, uncompromising acceptance of the world as it is "in all its complexity and squalor"; it looks to punk's aesthetic of jarring elements, disorderly, even ripped-apart surfaces, abrasive textures, or unnerving and dissonant colors, line, and composition. The New Spirit, like punk, is rebellious; it does not accept the world of "passive consumerist homogeneity" or, more to the point, the "establishment." And it even tries at times, Farrelly says, to "better the world in which we live."

The advent of the New Spirit should please Modernist architects, particularly English ones, who have been rankled by the reinstatement of Classical-oriented architecture, viewed by them as part and parcel of the reinstatement of a repressive social system that supposedly was dismantled by World War II. As architectural historian Reyner Banham explained at the Aspen conference, World War II opened up English society: the heavy losses suffered by England's elite meant that opportunities for advancement in both the armed services and the university were made available to Banham (a professed member of the lower class) and others of his social standing. The toehold gained by "nongentlemen" played a serious part in the creation of the socialist welfare state and in the role that Modernist architecture took in the reconstruction of Britain after the war. Those from "nongentlemanly" backgrounds were able to join the European and American Modernist vanguard in looking to developments in engineering rather than to the Classical orders for their inspiration. As we all know, the clean, pure, functional forms of the new architecture were soon adopted by capitalist America as its vision of the future, and the English allies could be sure that old-world architecture, and all it signified, was dead and buried.

But the dead are almost always mourned, and American architects were the first, about 1965, to start erecting monuments to that which Modernism had killed. As the Me Decade and yuppie era intervened in the U.S., the aristocracy grew again in England; by now, as articulated by Banham, this traditional taste in architecture is indicative of the political and social situation as a whole. Because of England's increasingly conservative government, Banham noted, educational opportunities have shriveled for the less privileged and the provincially born. In terms of design England now prefers "taste (upper class, that is) over creativity," and "memory over adventure," in a country that is both a "theme park and a banana republic."

The observations of Banham and York certainly appear to correspond to recent architectural events, such as the famous denunciation by Prince Charles in 1984 of the Modernist addition then planned for the National Gallery in London and the Mies van der Rohe–designed tower designated for Mansion Square (Less Is No More, House & Garden, October 1985). Prince Charles's speech was effective. Since then, American architect Robert Venturi, who is senior partner of Venturi, Rauch & Scott Brown (a firm that is both credited with and blamed for the spread of Postmodernism in the United States), has been named architect for the National Gallery addition on Trafalgar Square. And English architect James Stirling has come up with a (properly) low-scale, eclectically Classical scheme to be inserted in Man-



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sion Square where once a Mies tower was to have sprouted.

Over here we may not have royals carrying on about the faults of Modernism, but we do have an enthusiastic upwardly mobile middle class, and political atmosphere, that supports the traditional—financially, politically, and emotionally. Before *The Architectural Review* named it, the New Spirit had been making serious design inroads for a while through the leadership of Frank Gehry and a number of younger West Coast avant-garde types, such as Mark Mack or Bruce Tomb. But one still sees its examples more often in venues where artistic statements are expected—showrooms, shops, and restaurants—than where people live and work. Postmodernism began in this way; it is difficult to predict what form the New Spirit will take as it matures. Therefore now might be the moment for a word of caution about declarations of what is "out," or dead, and what is "in."

Both Postmodernism and the New Spirit show a certain nostalgia, admittedly for different things from different eras. Classicized Postmodernism obviously looks to a time when there was order, control, and everyone knew his place. By the same token, the New Spirit seems to be nostalgic about being revolutionary, not accepting prettification or escapism. But how can you accept the world in all its complexity and not accept its sentimentality and escapism—two dominant and very real urges of this age? The energetic, even desperate, desire to reject one response, direction, or trend in favor of another always seems to be the main problem: Postmodernism tried to revive certain valuable architectural concepts that had been dismissed too quickly and too completely by Modernist architects. Now the next successive wave of architects is trying to retrieve what was of value in Modernism, which was too easily dismissed by Postmodernists. The danger is not in what each has accepted, but what they have rejected. A few years ago we read, "Modernism is dead," and according to the proponents of the New Spirit, this was throwing the baby out with the bathwater. But to say "Postmodernism is dead" is simply throwing out a different baby, and different bathwater. □



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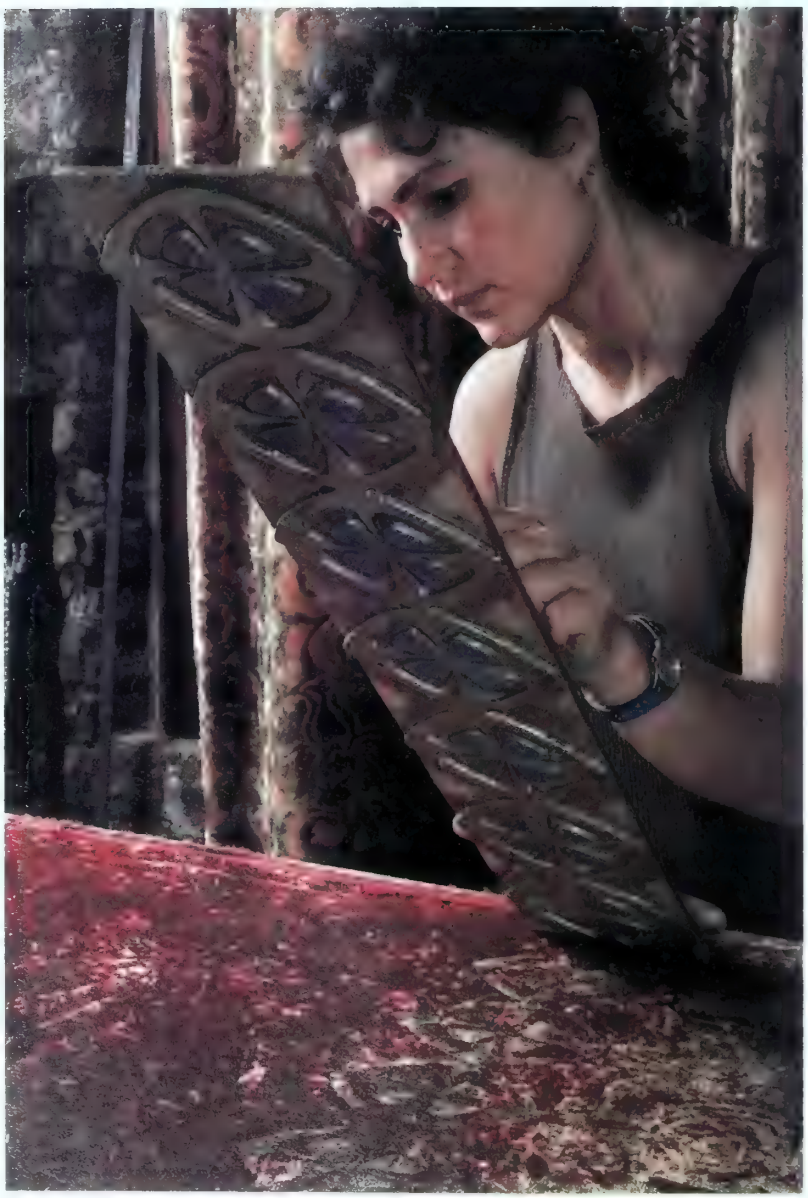
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A VELVET HAND

Mirella Spinella puts her very personal stamp on sumptuous fabrics and brings new life to a venerable Venetian tradition

By Martin Filler



Working alone in her Canareggio studio, Mirella Spinella dyes velvets in rich hues and prints them with patterns evoking the complex design heritage of Venice.

Not far from the touristic hordes trooping between San Marco and the Rialto lies a little-known but very charming quarter of Venice: Canareggio. It is a quiet working-class neighborhood that provides a welcome respite from the splendors of the greatest urban stage set ever devised by Western man. But this being Venice, not even a byway is without its quota of architectural grandeur. In Canareggio stands the Palazzo Lezze, and tucked away behind this imposing seventeenth-century landmark by Baldassare Longhena is the kind of picturesque surprise one often discovers in that city: the palazzo's small but nobly proportioned *barchessa* (boathouse), which has been converted into the Venetian Baroque equivalent of a mews house. But it has links other than architectural to a glorious past, for it is both home and workshop for a remarkable young woman who is continuing an important tradition in Venetian design.

She is the euphoniously named Mirella Spinella, a 33-year-old fabric designer who for the past seven years has been making textiles in an ancient technique that she taught herself through patient trial and error. Starting with pure-white velvet, she hand-dyes the material in tones worthy of a Tintoretto, deeply saturated yet delicate, giving it the panne texture that allows it to be used as an upholstery and drapery fabric. Next she prints the velvet with her own embossed designs, which are based on a broad spectrum of sources reflecting the numerous influences on the polymorphous culture of Venice during its thirteen-hundred-year history.

Spinella's fabrics summon up all the romantic mystique of La Serenissima; they bring to mind the deeply glinting gold-shot brocade vestments of the patriarch of Venice at Easter mass in the Basilica of San Marco, the gently faded damask in the background of one of Pietro Longhi's incomparable aristocratic genre scenes, or the voluminous velvet skirt of a masked Carnival reveler being robbed of a kiss by Don Giovanni Giacomo Casanova, chevalier de Seingalt.



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But the fabrics refer to much else besides Venice. Impressed into the lustrous nap of Spinella's velvets are the flattened palmettes and acanthus leaves of the ancient Minoans, paired doves by way of the early Christian mosaics of Ravenna, and the concentric whorls of the Vienna Secession direct from the paintings of Gustav Klimt. Her designs appear to be specifically historical at first glance but take on a theatrical generality the more one looks at them. And for the all-absorbing aesthetic of Venice, nothing could be more appropriate.

Ever since the island city-state was founded, in 697, textiles have figured significantly in its economic life. As gateway of trade between East and West, Venice was port of entry for the silks of the Orient as well as outlet for the wools of Lombardy and Tuscany. Not surprisingly, the weaving industry flourished in Venice, which produced some of Europe's most opulent stuffs during the several centuries when fabrics were among the most prized personal assets. In our own century the Venetian standard of luxury was given new definition by Mariano Fortuny, the protean couturier and fabric and furniture designer whose signature materials—especially his famous plissé silks and metallic-printed velvets—singlehandedly revived the reputation of Venice as a world center for cloth of the highest quality.

Although the Fortuny factory on the island of Giudecca still operates under the direction of the great founder's redoubtable successor, Countess Elsie McNeill Lee Gozzi, there is now a legitimate spiritual descendant—if also a would-be competitor—in Mirella Spinella. Since 1982 visitors to Venice have been snapping up her luxurious accessories (especially pillows, table covers, and wall hangings) at Antichità Emme, a treasure-crammed antiques shop just off the Frezzeria, the fashionable shopping street close to San Marco. By word of mouth her discriminating clientele has made her fabrics a sensation, and with good reason. Not only are they and the things made from them perfect souvenirs of Venice, but they are very much in harmony with the recently renewed interest in classic Italian decorating, exemplified by the work of such interior designers as Renzo Mongardino of Milan and such craftsmen as Lucrezia Moroni of New York.

Spinella already has a considerable following in Venice because, as she says of her fabrics, "I could put them on the walls of the city and they would



Above: A corner of the artist's living room, with chair, pillows, and curtains in her fabrics. Above the sofa, a document of Fortuny printed velvet. *Right:* The adjacent studio where Spinella works.



ported by Schieffelin & Co., New York, NY. 80 Proof. © 1986

be right." Her clients have included the decorator Piero Pinto (whose own quarters in a tiny converted chapel just off the Grand Canal contain a number of her pieces) and the Hotel Cipriani (whose exceptionally luxurious new rooms, designed by Gerard Gallet, combine Fortuny wall fabrics with Spinella bedspreads and curtains). The Cipriani project is perhaps the ultimate accolade for her: she reveres the work of the Granada-born Fortuny and preserves several documentary examples of his original fabrics in her *barchessa* as treasured relics.

Her atelier in the Longhena boathouse is swathed in her shimmering yard goods and is as infused with a sense of history and theater as the city she takes her inspiration from. It looks like the studio of a Baroque painter awaiting princely portrait sitters to pose before those voluptuous cloth cascades. The main workroom is dominated by a large rectangular table on which the dyed velvets are stretched, ready for the imprint of stencils and woodblocks. Because Spinella works in slow increments, completing only a foot or two at a time, the fabrics do not have the telltale uniformity of machine-printed designs but take on irregularities of pressure and variations of pigment, which give them the worn dignity of heirloom textiles. These creations, however, have the advantage of not being threadbare, accounting for an appearance that is at once stately and fresh.

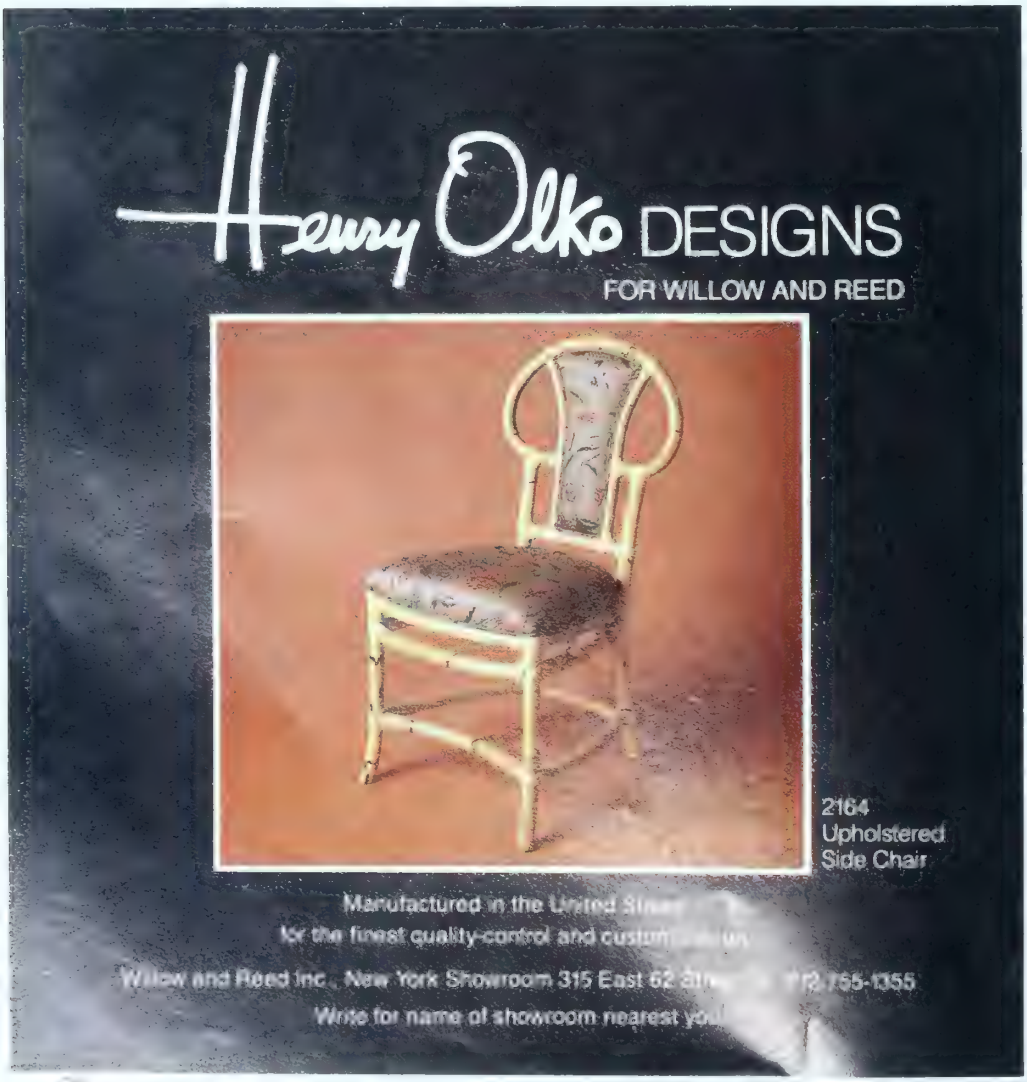


Across the canal from her home and studio—the former boathouse of the Palazzo Lezze—Spinella models a dress made from her gold-printed black velvet.

Above Spinella as she labors is a shelf with jars of the pigments she mixes herself. There are *oro ricco pallido* (rich pale gold), *oro ducato* (ducat gold), and *oro zecchino* (sequin gold) and powders in chrysoprase green, lapis blue, rhodochrosite pink, aluminum for simulating silver, and *terra mordente* (mordant earth) to fix the colors in the dyeing process. Both the composition of those colors and their application to fabric are secrets that Spinella discovered through research into old craft treatises, virtually the only way she could learn those arcane methods, given the jealous care with which they are guarded by practitioners who consider them a sacred heritage of family businesses, not to be idly disclosed to strangers.

As delightful as it has been for Americans to discover Mirella Spinella's sumptuous interior enrichments in her native city, the trip is no longer a necessary part of the experience. Her fabrics are now a major attraction of Portantina, a new shop at 886 Madison Avenue in New York, which has been handsomely transformed by the Boston-based architects Rodolfo Machado and Jorge Silvetti. That tiny but captivating interior conveys all the glamour and intrigue of Venice. In the soft subaqueous light the piles of panne emit a glow both muted and intense. The same can be said for Signorina Spinella herself, whose attitude toward her new success is far from expansionist. "Maybe in the future the best way is to produce less than now and better than now," she wonders. When reminded that this seems to fly in the face of all commercial wisdom, she answers calmly, "Not for my life." □

Mirella Spinella, who also works on commission, can be contacted through Antichità Emme, Piscina de Frezzeria 1651, Venice, Italy; tel. 011-39-41-523-5666.



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GOING FOR 10'S

New York's Florian Papp is a shop that teaches its customers how to distinguish between "good" and the "best"

By Edward Lebow



Left: William and Melinda Papp with selections from their 18th- and 19th-century English furniture. *Below:* A washstand made by William Lomax, c. 1880.



At Florian Papp the purchase of a fine piece of antique English furniture is often a marriage followed by an extended courtship. "Six months later," says Melinda Papp, who minds the store with William, her brother, and Alice, her mother, "clients will come back to tell us about this little inlay, that little edge, or some other detail they've just discovered. A year later, they'll find something else." That's the way it should be, she thinks, a "quiet unfolding."

For others, the purchase is love fulfilled. The most recent important piece Florian Papp sold went to a young woman who, Melinda says, "knew every example on the marketplace. Not only did she know how much they were and where she had seen them, she understood the subtle differences that distinguished each one." Rare as it is, such connoisseurship is being sought by more and more buyers here and abroad. "People don't just want to know who Chippendale was," says William Papp, "they want to know what he did, and where, and for how long." They find out, as the Papps have, by reading, looking, and talking.

Talk is the drug of the trade. "If somebody knows English furniture," says Melinda, "I want to know them. Not because we expect them to buy, but because I want to talk shop. I want to hear what they think." The other stimulant is scholarship. Because most of the outfitters of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century English home slipped away without a peep, the Papps are constantly stirring cold ashes for clues to where this one worked or that one kept his drawings. The Furniture History Society of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London yearly turns up new information to embarrass what was formerly thought to be fact.

In the basement office of Florian Papp, where phone calls come in and commiserations go out in hushed English and French, Melinda points to a wall of books: "All out of date, and sometimes wrong," she says. In that sense the history of furniture is no different from the history of art or any field. Today's version is being constantly altered by what tomorrow finds in the attics and cellars of Suffolk, Hampshire, or the V&A. New names, dates, materials, methods, recipes for lacquers, and stylistic attributions circulate on a tide of perpetual discovery. In a business where this year's find may lead to next year's show, profit, or higher price, knowledge has a way of landing in the bank. Prices for English antiques rise from sea level to $250,000 for exceptional pieces such as the circa-1750 black-lac-

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quet bureau cabinet on Florian Papp's third floor. That isn't just a New York price. Those who wanted to shop closer to the source would probably find the same tag in Paris or London. Buyers used to be able to hop the Atlantic for better rates, but the high-end pieces—the rarities the Papps call 10's—go for the same all over.

"Fashions come and go," Melinda says, "but 10's stay. They will always be great, and they will always attract more than one buyer." Their color will be rare, their proportions perfect, their visual conception ideal, their craftsmanship impeccable, and their surfaces will have little repainting or they may even retain their original patination. Melinda can recite the criteria in her sleep.

Although 10's are that rare, Melinda confides that telling a buyer he is getting his money's worth seems ludicrous. "How can you justify these prices?" she asks. "I can't. These prices are crazy. We have no control over them, but we *can* control the quality of the objects. We can eliminate the mediocre, show the best, encourage our clients to go to Europe to see the prices of equivalent things, and when they return, we can point out the salient features that distinguish the best from the good."

Some are obvious, some not. "Most people buy the outside," says William, but the Papps go for the inside. The guts of furniture reveal just how far its maker pursued quality and detail. Are the drawer linings mahogany or pine—primary or secondary wood? Are they thick or thin, their dovetailing clear or flubbed, their edges beveled or square, their surfaces lacquered or unpainted? Do they fit their slot or have room to move?

"Let's call it a navy blue blazer," says Melinda. "From across the room, you can't tell much more than the color or cut. What about the fabric, the lining, the stitching, the seams?" When it comes to furniture, she says, "judgment begins with the eye but ends with knowledge. It has everything to do with knowing what materials were available, what their limitations may have been, and what social and artistic influences played into the piece." Then she drops the blazer analogy for Givenchy.

"Suppose I order a dress of the best design, best fabric, as original as can be. Then I turn to him and say, 'I want my initials on the inside and I want a special embroidery on the hem, and I want you to promise never to duplicate it for anyone else.' That's a dress for the costume institute. And the kind of furniture we're looking for." It is also the kind of furniture Papp's clients are after. It was that way between the original makers and owners of the furniture. "These were patrons," says Melinda, "who had the courage, taste, education, and money to demand the best."

Kings, queens, and cousins fit the bill. But, as the Papps point out, the Buick-size furnishings that royalty rolled into its halls were in a league alone. Not until the second quarter of





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the eighteenth century did the estate holders become active patrons, widely commissioning the good taste from which Florian Papp has made its reputation.

Credit that reputation to Melinda's and William's father—also named William—and his brother, Joseph. They inherited a trade in American antiques from their father, Florian—thus the gallery's name—and gradually shifted its emphasis to England. But with limits. They preferred the simpler lines and exotic woods of the Queen Anne era and the striking proportions of Georges the Second and Third to the large mahogany meals that loomed beyond the Regency. They apparently wanted no part of the earlier Victorian era (1830–50), which has filled the realm with queasy furniture and swollen ornamentation.

Joseph died in the 1960s. By the time William passed away, in 1979, Florian Papp still had only wiggled its toes in the nineteenth century. For a time Melinda and William followed their father's trail, says William, hurrying "through the nineteenth century to get to the 1760 Chippendale." But four or five years ago they began slowing whenever they passed furniture from the English Aesthetic Movement (1860–80). They kept their hands in their pockets at first. Then William bought for his own enjoyment. Eventually he and Melinda committed Florian Papp's money. It was another case, says Melinda, of "not being able to pass up 10's." They stored them in the warehouse until their mother finally took a peek and said, "What are you kids doing? *Do* something with it!" They have spent nearly two years preparing the show "English Aesthetic Furniture, 1860–1880" on view through December 3.

The Aesthetic Movement was the aesthetes' cure for the Victorian flu. Their diet was simplicity, fine craftsmanship, and highly decorated surfaces. The movement encompassed all the arts and crafts. "The idea," says William, "was to involve the artist, cabinetmaker, woodturner—all the crafts—in products that specifically invited visual delectation."

Furniture became a vehicle for rich marquetry, painted, gilded, tiled, and ebonized surfaces. "You see light panels of wood beautifully contrasted with dark," says William, "or black ebonized areas highlighted with gold lines. Look at the washstand by Mr. Lomax. There you have the gray marble top, the warm-toned woods below, and the vividly painted splash rail." He steps back, smiles, then shakes his head. He is looking at the aquatic scene painted on the splash rail—watering and feeding birds, fish, and flowers in bloom. "Just imagine a full pitcher and bowl of water next to this," he says. Then he winks, confiding, "I know for a fact they sealed it with lacquer."

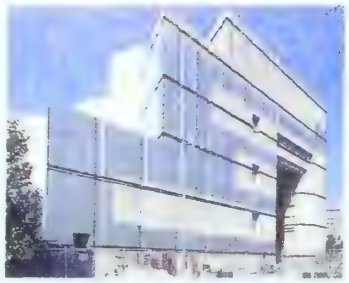
He also knows that to the modern eye the simplicity of these objects may appear—in a word—flamboyant. "But compared with a mahogany cabinet from the 1850s," he says, "this is simple." That simplicity came from scores of stylistic and historical influences. James Whistler, whose Peacock Room is the quintessence of the Aesthetic interior, turned to the Orient for his motifs. Others, such as William Morris, his Arts and Crafts followers, and the Pre-Raphaelites, turned back the clock. Morris sought simplicity in the medieval traditions of English guild craftsmanship, eschewing industrial methods and preaching a gospel of handcrafted design. "The Pre-Raphaelites," says William, "thought that better proportions existed in art done before Raphael's time, so a good deal of their imagery combined simpler forms and motifs from the past with the Romantic symbolism of their day." They were looking backward, going ahead.

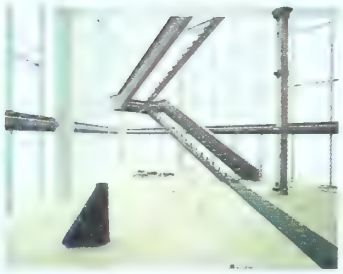
Those who want to see what happened when the Aesthetic Movement came to America should take in the Metropolitan Museum of Art's exhibition "In Pursuit of Beauty: Americans and the Aesthetic Movement," through January 11. The Met has cast a much wider net, bringing in approximately two hundred works from the spectrum of household crafts. "Their styling," Papp says of the American objects, "is perhaps a little more reserved. The Americans incorporated the rich surfaces with designs that were slightly more straightforward." Both, he adds, "point to the twentieth century," where Florian Papp, its clients will be happy to know, has no immediate plans to go. □



JOURNAL

On the arts scene





THE GREAT WALL OF WILSHIRE

Having outgrown its original three-building complex, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art called on Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates to fashion a complementary structure, *above* and *right*. Plans feature a heroic new entrance on Wilshire Boulevard—a 50-foot-square portal with columned entry court flanked by a four-tier waterfall and illuminated by skylights. Within, the architects expand space for special exhibitions and permanent collections, providing an acute design for the city of angles. *David Lisi*





TYCOON TIPS

Diane Hartford, Lynn Phillips, Milo Steale, and Rusty Unger have mogulized some wit to define what is short, doesn't fly coach, and has tinted limousine windows in *How to Be a Mogul* (Clarkson N. Potter, $10), *above*. Among endearing habits and bons mots: Mystery Mogul wears bullet-proof Armani, Upwardly Mogul dates Gloria Steinem, Mogulines have their houses redecorated every 28 days, and fulfilling every girl Mogul's dream, Dad says: "Of course I will marry you, Princess." *Shelley Wanger*



AFTER EKATERINBURG

Did the Grand Duchess Anastasia of Russia survive her family's execution in 1918? We will never know, but viewers are in for another telling of her alleged story this month in NBC's four-hour miniseries *Anastasia: The Story of Anna*. Amy Irving stars, *left*. *Gabrielle Winkel*

GRACE OF STATES

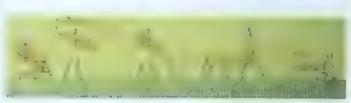
Though she was Her Serene Highness residing in a palace in Monaco far longer than she was a movie star, many Americans still consider Philadelphia-born Grace Kelly their own. And it seems natural that she be memorialized in her native country. This fall the National Portrait Gallery in Washington unveils a bronze portrait head of the late Princess Grace of Monaco, *right*, by Dutch sculptor Kees Verkade. *G.W.*





PYRAMID SCHEMES

In the wake of Napoleon's conquering army the leading scholars of France converged upon Egypt to examine and catalogue its treasures. A selection of their findings, published in the 19th century as *Description de l'Égypte*, now reappears in *The Monuments of Egypt* (Princeton Architectural Press, $65). The volume features 430 annotated engravings, *left* and *below*, from five of the original folios and illustrates a legacy of artisans which outlives the ambitions of kings. *D.L.*





EVERYTHING FROM ROAST TO TOAST.

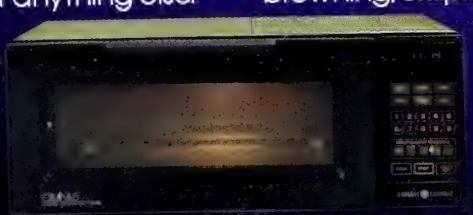
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On the Wing is presented by Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum and Johnson Wax at over fifty IMAX/OMNIMAX theaters, including National Air and Space Museum, Washington; American Museum of Natural History, New York; California Museum of Science and Industry, Los Angeles. *G.W.*



TIM STREET PORTER

HOT CHA CHA CHA

The L.A. casual dining scene is as easy as Cha Cha Cha, *above,* new eatery of the smart set on the "other end" of Melrose Avenue. Aiming for a "contemporary California–Caribbean feeling" with food to match, owners Mario Tamayo and Toribio Prado dish up specialties steeped in exotic island spices and fruits. Local artists, including Matthew Malhendric (painting on the wall at right), provided the décor, a "young, colorful environment" with a cool Latin beat. *D.L.*

RECAMIER RECAPTURED

At 15, Juliette Bernard made a marriage of convenience with Jacques Récamier, a banker three times her age. She used his money to develop a salon that attracted the top intellectuals of the day—Madame de Staël, Sainte-Beuve, Benjamin Constant, and Chateaubriand. She is, however, better known for giving her name to a double-ended backless chaise longue. The furniture struck the fancy of no less an authority than France's Musée des Arts Décoratifs, which at a Sotheby's auction in June paid over $29,500 for the very chaise longue, *bottom,* that Madame Récamier reputedly sat upon when Jacques Louis David did her portrait in 1800, *below.* (The chaise had been estimated to bring $6,000–$9,000.)

Madame Récamier didn't like David's portrait, which remains unfinished and on display in the Louvre, but the recamier now has a place of honor in the Musée next door. The design of the recamier is David's as well—ébéniste Georges Jacob executed it in mahogany, then a new exotic wood.

Margaret Morse





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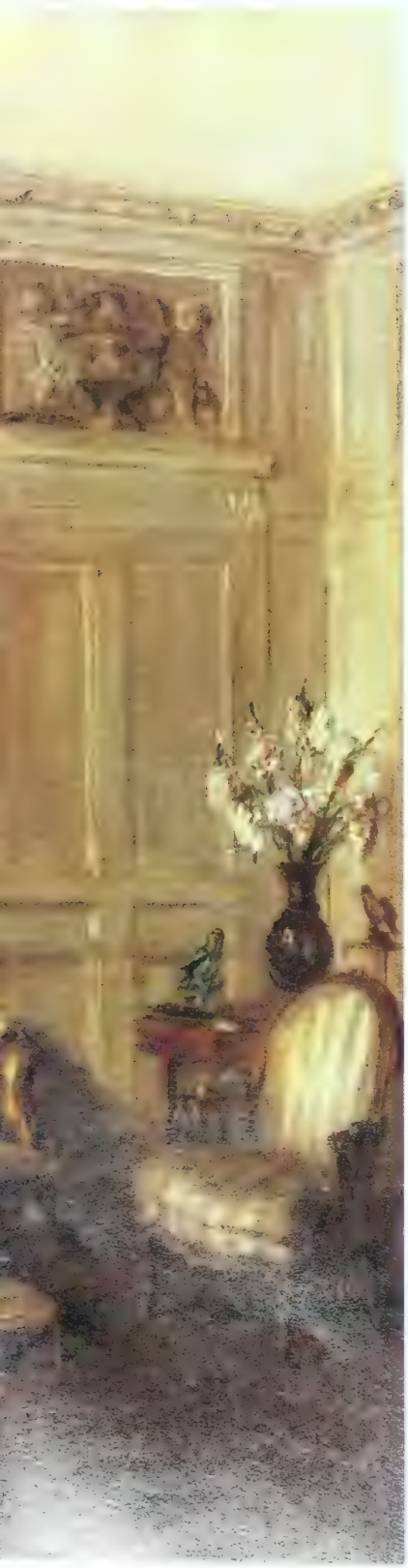


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ALL ABOUT STYLE

By Nancy Richardson

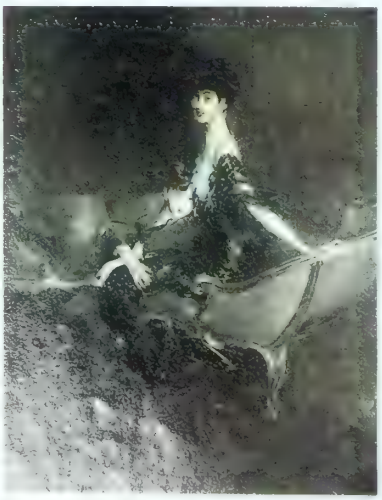






The more you examine the taste for eighteenth-century architecture and decoration, the more evidence there is that there were in fact two eighteenth centuries—one that happened at the time and another that occurred at the end of the nineteenth century and continues, only somewhat diminished, to this day. Recently Simon Jervis, a leading curator at the Victoria and Albert, has found the two eighteenth centuries interfering with each other in the public's impression of the restoration of historic houses. It seems that those individuals who like eighteenth-century English decoration the most are the ones who are extremely uncomfortable with authentic eighteenth-century restorations. Why? Perhaps because they like old furniture since it is old and the fabrics are muted. But in the eighteenth century the rooms and the furnishings were new, looked new, and were admired for being new. In short, what we like about eighteenth-century antiques has little to do with the eighteenth century as it was. That of course doesn't matter at all unless you're trying to restore a historic house or install a period room in a museum. The cult of antiques in twentieth-century decoration started in the 1890s and some of the earliest experiments continue to be the most interesting. In the case of a group of American expatriate Francophiles the congruent use of French eighteenth-century furniture, pictures, and objects in actual eighteenth-century houses was a twist of the original dial that was completely in the spirit of the original without being archaeological in the slightest. As decoration, its influence on us via various grandmothers has only recently begun to wane. It could be called Walter Gay taste if you wanted to look at Edith Wharton's taste from another angle. Certainly it was based on what Gay saw in the *pavillons* and small châteaux just outside Paris that were put together after 1900 by Americans like Edith Wharton and Elsie de Wolfe. His paintings of these interiors might even be seen as the illustrations

In terms of decoration there were two 18th centuries, one at the time, the other a cult of 18th-century antiques which began in the 1890s



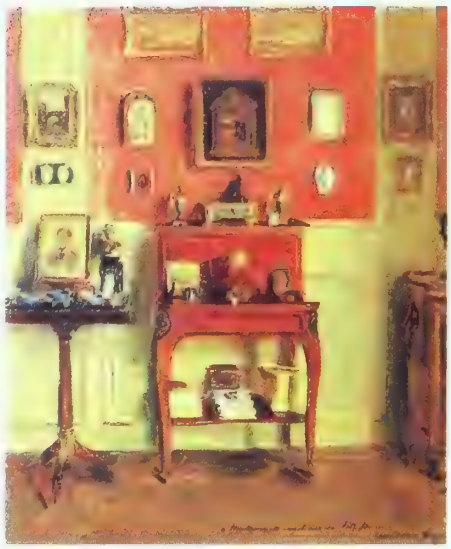
Clockwise from top right: An Interior in Venice, John Singer Sargent, Royal Academy of Arts, London. *Mrs. Gay Reclining on a Lit de Repos,* Walter Gay, Graham Gallery, New York. *Consuelo, Duchess of Marlborough, and Her Son, Lord Ivor Spencer Churchill,* Giovanni Boldini, Metropolitan Museum of Art. *Detail: Interior of the Pavillon Colombe,* Gay, Graham Gallery.



© 1986 Hanes Hosiery, Inc.

for Mrs. Wharton's *Decoration of Houses*. Though done abroad and initially aimed at a European audience, the impact of these pictures was greatest at home in a sophisticated group on the Eastern seaboard, where they became blueprints for a revival of French eighteenth-century decoration.

Walter Gay, like Edith Wharton, collected eighteenth-century furniture, objects, and drawings. He was constantly rearranging the rooms of his own small Château de Bréau as well as a series of apartments in Paris. He seemed to like rooms just for their windows, stuccowork, paneling, and marble and parquet floors and often painted parts of a house where there was no furniture at all. When he focused on the furnishings of a room—on porcelain, Oriental chests, marquetry commodes, or the sober furniture he preferred to the grander things from royal palaces—there was no doubt that within the artist lived a decorator of note. Versions of French-château taste have turned up on Long Island, in San Francisco, Chicago, Washington, Newport, and along Park and Fifth avenues for sixty years.



Interior, Walter Gay, Graham Gallery

In a Walter Gay exhibition organized in 1980 by Gary Reynolds at the Grey Gallery of New York University, there were three paintings of Edith Wharton's Pavillon Colombe which gave an inkling of what Mrs. Wharton did for herself. These rooms reflected a unity of design that began with the walls and extended to everything in it. The furniture was leggy and light, there was a richness that had to do with architectural details rather than gilt-bronze mountings. These interiors were intimate in scale and provided a setting for friendship and quiet sophistication rather than intrigue, display, and court life. The Pavillon Colombe had six rooms on the ground floor that not only opened into the garden but also one into the other, making an enfilade along the garden front. Some of Mrs. Wharton's French visitors found the house too perfect, the furniture on the whole too consistently on a high level—indicating a collection more than an organic group of furnishings. The level of housekeeping rubbed the French as being too fanatical, the guests too literate and generally too illustrious. But Mrs. Wharton *was* literate and operated under her own theory of aesthetics. As important to her as overdoor medallions and Louis XVI commodes were the sounds of church bells and birds singing and the pleasures of a garden. A guest was someone to talk to.

Walter Gay was of the same frame of mind, loving the rooms of his Château de Bréau for their boniness, the wear in the marble floors, the unevenness and creaking of the parquet ones. He loved the tranquillity as well as the morale of continuity and stability. To him these houses were places where the inclination to read would be uninterrupted, sleep would be deep, and if there were children, they would become better educated just by the experience of the architecture.

By 1900 Elsie de Wolfe had already digested Mrs. Wharton's attitudes in *The Decoration of Houses*. She also knew Walter Gay, but she proceeded to do something a little different with the cult of the French eighteenth century. Elsie de Wolfe added both gaiety and frivolity to her life at the Villa Trianon, a house that bordered on the park of Versailles. There were blue-and-white boiseries indoors, Chinese pictures painted on glass, both real and reproduction eighteenth-century furniture. Outside there was a statue by Clodion, clipped yews, and a blue-tiled

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The Charter Collection
BY CAROLINA MIRROR



swimming pool. Walter Gay went from time to time for lunch served outdoors under striped awnings. He found the atmosphere "decadent" with "good-looking but discontented" Americans and "off-colored" French people. But then the charming thing about Gay was that he projected an edifying influence onto château life.

He also moved in the world of John Singer Sargent, Sargent's friend Paul Helleu, and the well-known womanizer Giovanni Boldini. Although the portraits by each of these artists constantly reaffirmed the social cachet of eighteenth-century furniture, they revealed little interest in that furniture other than as studio props. Both Sargent and Gay painted the salon of the Palazzo Barbaro in Venice when the Daniel Sargent Curtises owned it. Gay painted the room on its own, Sargent did a portrait of the room with the family in it. Sargent seemed to have loved the height of the room, its shadowy cool, and above all the gleam of giltwood furniture. If you look at Sargent's late portraits in the exhibition currently at the Whitney Museum as well as at Boldini's most fashionable work, it is hard to find a portrait that doesn't have a chair or settee with a giltwood frame. The eighteenth-century furniture these artists liked best as a symbol, even if the sitter was English, was a French piece—a daybed, settee, or chaise longue. The limbs of these pieces were treated to the same fashionable elongation as the limbs of the human subjects.

Walter Gay spent years in France, but he returned home much more than John Singer Sargent did. In the twenties his work was exhibited almost every other year at Wildenstein and the effect on contemporary decoration was considerable. Elsie de Wolfe and everybody else bought these interior views, perhaps preferring Gay's view of the eighteenth century to the eighteenth century itself. Walter Gay paintings have turned up in New York at both Christie's and Sotheby's sales in recent years. The Graham Gallery in New York always has several examples at a time. □



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(The above are actual quotes from letters and comment cards. Names of the guests have been changed to protect their privacy.)

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The Rose Garden at
Dumbarton Oaks in winter,
photographed by Ping Amranand.

TREASURES OF THE GREEN VAULTS

In Dresden's fabled Schatzkammer, the astonishing creations of the court jewelers to Augustus the Strong took fantasy to new heights

BY OLIVIER BERNIER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERICH LESSING

Great heaps of diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and sapphires, cascades of pearls, ewers and coffeepots of gold and silver, all wrought by some of the most skilled and inventive goldsmiths who ever lived: this great accumulation of objects so precious that they seem to belong in Aladdin's cave, this profusion of treasures was made for the everyday use of the electors of Saxony between the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries at a time when the court of Dresden was one of the most splendid in Europe. And of all the jewel-loving family, none prized dazzle more than Augustus II.

His collections, in fact, gave rise to slightly disbelieving admiration. They were larger, it seemed, more diverse and richer than those belonging to any other potentate. Still their superiority could be disputed: foreigners, after all, were not admitted to the Secret Depository, the strong room at the heart of Dresden Castle. Not, that is, until 1723.

That is when Augustus the Strong, who enjoyed surprising the world, took an unprecedented step. Starting with one room's worth, then in 1730 expanding to four rooms plus a vestibule and a cloakroom, all the treasures accumulated by the electors of Saxony since the Middle Ages were put on public view, right in the vaults where they had been stored all along. Of course, the collection was seldom complete: Augustus, who liked to glitter, took out whatever he felt like wearing on any given day, but there was so much to see that it hardly made any difference.

Museums of one kind or another had existed ever since the Renaissance. They were usually accumulations of rare or unexplained objects—unicorn horns were especially popular—but these dusty repositories had little in common with the Green Vaults. There, in the original room with its green walls—hence the name—and in the four rooms that were added to it, was a blend of the rare and the precious, carefully displayed to make viewing easy.

Many of the standards of a modern museum, safety first and foremost, already obtained: the walls of the Green Vaults were over six feet thick; the windows were blocked by heavy iron gratings and shutters; and, of course, there were guards watching the visitors. Fire and theft were thus impossibilities: the centuries have proved it. From 1723 to 1943, when their contents were removed to greater safety, not an item was ever stolen. As for fire, the bombing that razed Dresden, and indeed the rest of the castle, left the Green Vaults intact.

Nor had installation, that lodestar of twentieth-century exhibitions, been forgotten when Augustus decided to put his jewels on view. He asked Matthäus Daniel Pöppelmann, the architect of the Zwinger, to design a setting. By 1730 the walls of the five *(Text continued on page 222)*

The jewel-encrusted Hercules Vase, an Egyptian jasper vessel surmounted by an enamel portrait of Augustus the Strong, was made by J. M. Dinglinger in 1710.





Detail from the Gold Coffee Set, 1701. Typical of Augustus's taste, this service and its Rococo pyramid was designed by J. M. Dinglinger with enamels by his brother Georg Friedrich. Enriched with diamonds, pearls, and other precious gems, it also includes ivory mythological figures and Meissen cups.

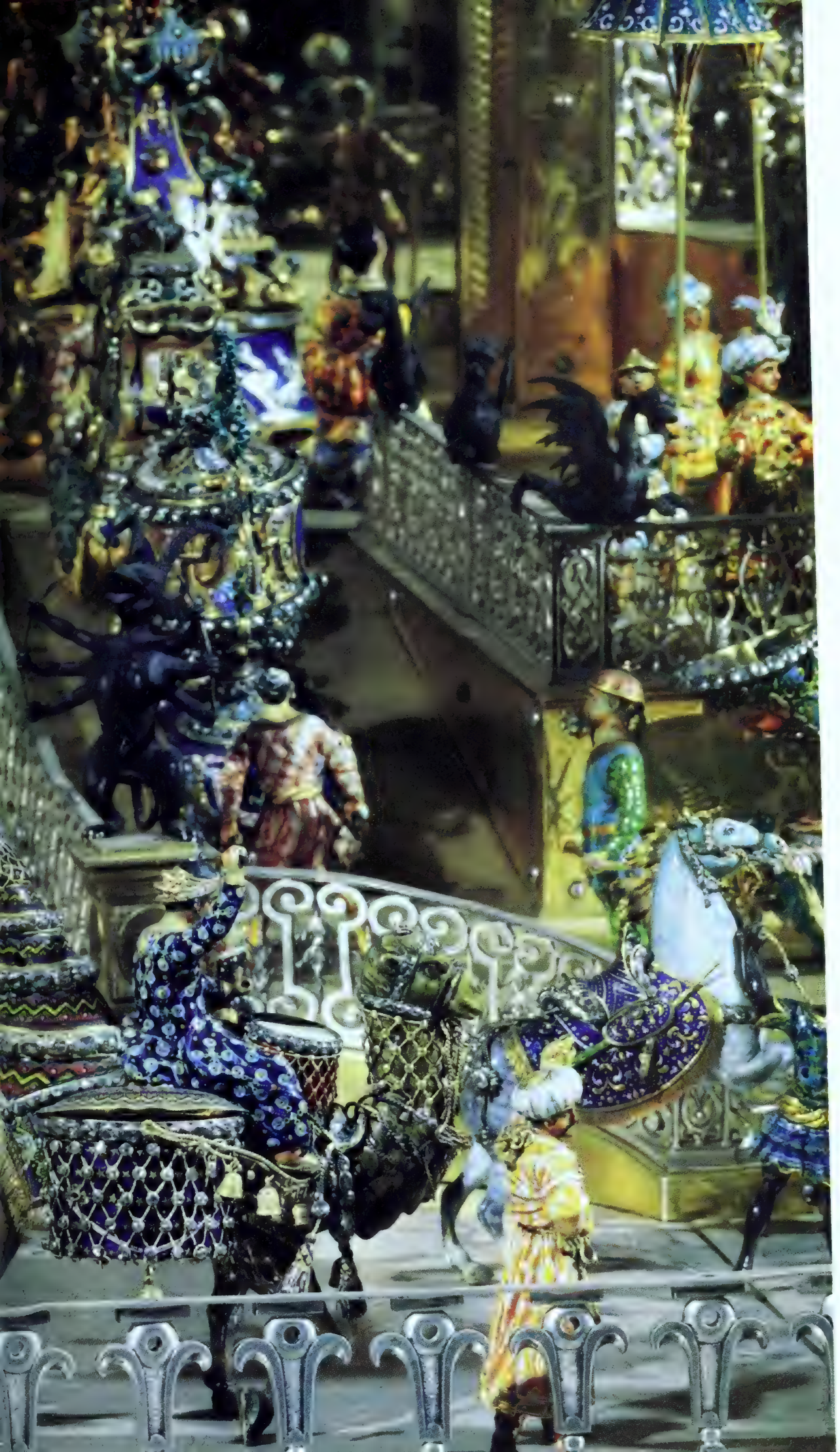




Vessel in the shape of Daphne, *above,* made by Abraham Jamnitzer about 1600. It shows the moment when, fleeing Apollo, Daphne was transformed into a laurel tree. The body is silver and vermeil; the stylized tree, a branch of coral. *Opposite:* This diamond and carnelian aigrette is part of a set, made in 1719 by Dinglinger, that also included the pendant of the Golden Fleece, a watch, buttons, cane handles, an etui, and two swords. It is only one of the many collections of jewels worn by Augustus on every possible occasion.







The left corner of a tableau depicting the birthday of the Grand Mughal Aurengzebe at the court of Delhi; this intricate and vast object—it is 56 inches wide and 45 inches deep—is made of gold, vermeil, silver, precious stones, and enamel. Completed in 1708, it is an early instance of the taste for Orientalia that swept Europe in the 18th century.



CONNOISSEURSHIP ON RITTENHOUSE SQUARE

Henry McIlhenny's passion for civilized living drew the world of arts and letters to his door

BY JOHN RICHARDSON
PHOTOGRAPHS BY OBERTO GILI



Henry McIlhenny, the Philadelphian collector who died this year, was one of the last American Maecenases: witness his sumptuous house (actually three houses knocked into one) on Rittenhouse Square and the Balmoralized castle he used to own in Donegal. Henry was not only a great connoisseur, he was one of the last exponents of a tradition going back to the Augustan Age: the tradition of the scholarly plutocrat with a passion for the gamut of civilized living—for gardening, cooking, and conversation as well as art, music, and literature. There was also a dash of the nabob about him: a benign Beckford. Although his French paintings were incomparable—in my opinion the best private collection of its kind in the country—Henry never allowed them to upstage his way of life. On the contrary, unlike today's collectors, most of whom exploit their acquisitions for financial, social, or egotistical reasons, he was at pains to play down his possessions, except in the company of other art lovers whose pleasure enhanced his own.

To his vast circle of friends Henry was also one of the warmest, funniest, liveliest, most generous men on either side of the Atlantic. For he lived by his dictum that "wealth must be used for the enjoyment of others." Henry's hospitality was such that one expected a flunky with McILHENNY ARMS embroidered on his cap to be waiting at Philadelphia's 30th Street Station or Belfast's airport. As he told Patrick O'Higgins, "A good host is nothing more than a good innkeeper." In fact, Henry was far, far more than an innkeeper, as the countless visitors to Rittenhouse Square or the thirty-thousand-acre fiefdom in Donegal (now a state park) can testify.

Before we visit Henry in Ireland, let us, in retrospect, drop by his mansion on Rittenhouse Square. This had been considerably enlarged in the early seventies, when he bought the house next door and turned it into extra guest rooms, staff quarters, and, not least, a marble-floored ballroom—decorated by his great friends Denning and Fourcade and inaugurated by Princess Margaret. True, as chairman of the board of the Philadelphia Museum, director of the Philadelphia Orchestra Association, and much else besides, Henry was obliged to do a lot of entertaining—something for which he and his collector sister, Bernice Wintersteen, had an innate gift—but as he grew older, this least snobbish of men seemed happiest relaxing, exchanging ideas and badinage with old cronies: musicians or curators, decorators or dendrologists, auctioneers or poets—for preference people who did something interesting or had a spark of originality or folly. How refreshing it was to stay in a rich man's house where fellow guests had been invited on the grounds of friendship, not because they were millionaires or socialites or good at golf or cards; a house where civilized values prevailed, where tables, not least bedside ones, were stacked with all the *(Text continued on page 212)*

Henry McIlhenny, *above. Opposite:* In the entrance hall, a carved giltwood George II mirror, decorated with holly for Christmas by New York florist Marlo Phillips, hangs above an early-19th-century marble bust of Medusa on an Empire mahogany side table. Throughout the house, Marlo added fruit and flowers to create a seasonal spirit.





In the ballroom, Landseer's *Night*, c. 1853, is reflected in the mirror above a pair of late-19th-century bronzes of Classical warriors. On the right hangs *Oracle in an Egyptian Temple* by Bernardino Nocchi. The candelabras are early-19th-century bronze and ormolu. Marlo decorated the Fraser fir tree with baby's breath and seed lights.





Matisse's *Still Life on Table,* 1925, hangs in the dining room.





The Charles X *bois clair* furniture in the drawing room is covered in silk by Scalamandré from an original 19th-century design. Lautrec's *La Danse au Moulin Rouge* hangs above the console, Van Gogh's *Rain*, 1889, above the méridienne, and partially visible on the right is Renoir's *Mlle. Legrand*, 1875.





Degas's pastel *Mary Cassatt at the Louvre*, 1880, is in the drawing room, *opposite*. *This page*: Chardin's *The Hare*, c. 1730, is above Louis XIV Boulle commode in the dining room beside a Louis XV giltwood screen signed Jean-Baptiste Tilliard, 1752.





SETTING FOR A SALON

A room that could be anywhere, but not at any other time

BY JOHN RICHARDSON
PHOTOGRAPHS BY OBERTO GILI

A magnificent still life with a parrot and dog amid fur and feathers, *above*, by the 17th-century Dutch artist Frans Snyders, hangs over a table with 18th-century candlesticks in a corner of the living room, *opposite*.

The great room photographed in these pages is the principal section of a larger complex, which includes several elegant bedrooms and domestic offices. But since it involves an unusually bold approach to space, we decided to restrict ourselves to this one expanse. Conceived in the grandiose terms of a long gallery, such as one might find in an English country house, the room is nevertheless as functional and homogeneous as any *machine à habiter*. The unity stems from a basically simple decorative concept: a set of four enormous gray-painted bookcases, dramatically set against a background of red-on-red wallpaper, and six sets of handsome chintz curtains. A number of armchairs and sofas are likewise upholstered in the same traditional rose-covered stuff. These disparate elements are anchored by a vast area of a Brussels weave carpet after a nineteenth-century pattern.

Alas, we are not at liberty to divulge where this room is or who stays here. Let us, therefore, indulge in a little guesswork. There are several conceivable localities: London, to start with, but the fireplaces tell us that although we may be in Belgravia in spirit, we are not there in fact. Neuilly and the Upper East Side are also possibilities, or we could be off in the country: Dorset, Connecticut, or the Vallée de Chevreuse. Your guess is not as good as mine, for I have the advantage of being a friend of the chatelain(e). Lady or gentleman, I am not at liberty to say, only that we are dealing with a personage of great culture, distinction, and wit—a peripatetic personage who is forever dismaying friends in Europe by abandoning them for others in America and vice versa.

This personage has always had a very exact idea of the way things should look, and to this extent masterminded the operation, although the execution of the work was entrusted to a close friend who happens to be a distinguished decorator. As photographs reveal, the basic elements—the rose-patterned chintz, wallpaper, carpet—are old favorites from London. As for furniture, it is inherited,



The grand vista of the long gallery room looking toward the dining area hidden behind the Coromandel screen. Levrettes abound in this room—on the table in front of the low dividing bookcase on the left, and one by Barye on the mantel under a painting by the artist Peter Fasseeh. On either side, [illegible] with the olive green [illegible] in the room.


T.S.E.
W.H.AUDEN



Conceived in the grandiose terms of a long gallery such as one might find in an English country house, this room is as functional and homogeneous as any *machine à habiter*

good, mostly English things. The objects—a more heterogeneous collection—include a remarkable group of white embossed dishes and plates from that most beautiful of all dinner services, the Meissen Swan service made at the height of the Rococo for Augustus III of Saxony.

Maybe the books will help us with our quest, so let us take a magnifying glass and see if the titles yield any clues. For, heaven knows, this room is primarily a library—a real one in which to read and not simply watch television or play cards (although, as we can see, cards and scorers are laid out as an alternative to more serious pursuits). As one might expect, the books are not for show but for serious perusal, and what intellectual curiosity they reveal. Whoever owns these books speaks four languages, is formidably *instruit,* and has a working knowledge of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century history, old master drawings, musicology, and much else besides. The complete Bibliothèque de la Pléiade rubs shoulders with Kundera and Naipaul, Musil and Evelyn Waugh.

As for the huge paintings that are such a feature of the room: these turn out to be major works by Frans Snyders and other seventeenth-century masters of the Dutch school. Such Lucullan displays of fruit and flowers and trophies of fur, feather, and fin evoke the atmosphere of Dutch galleries at the Hermitage or some English nobleman's house in bygone days. But it is no good trying to track down their provenance in dealers' or auctioneers' *(Text continued on page 204)*





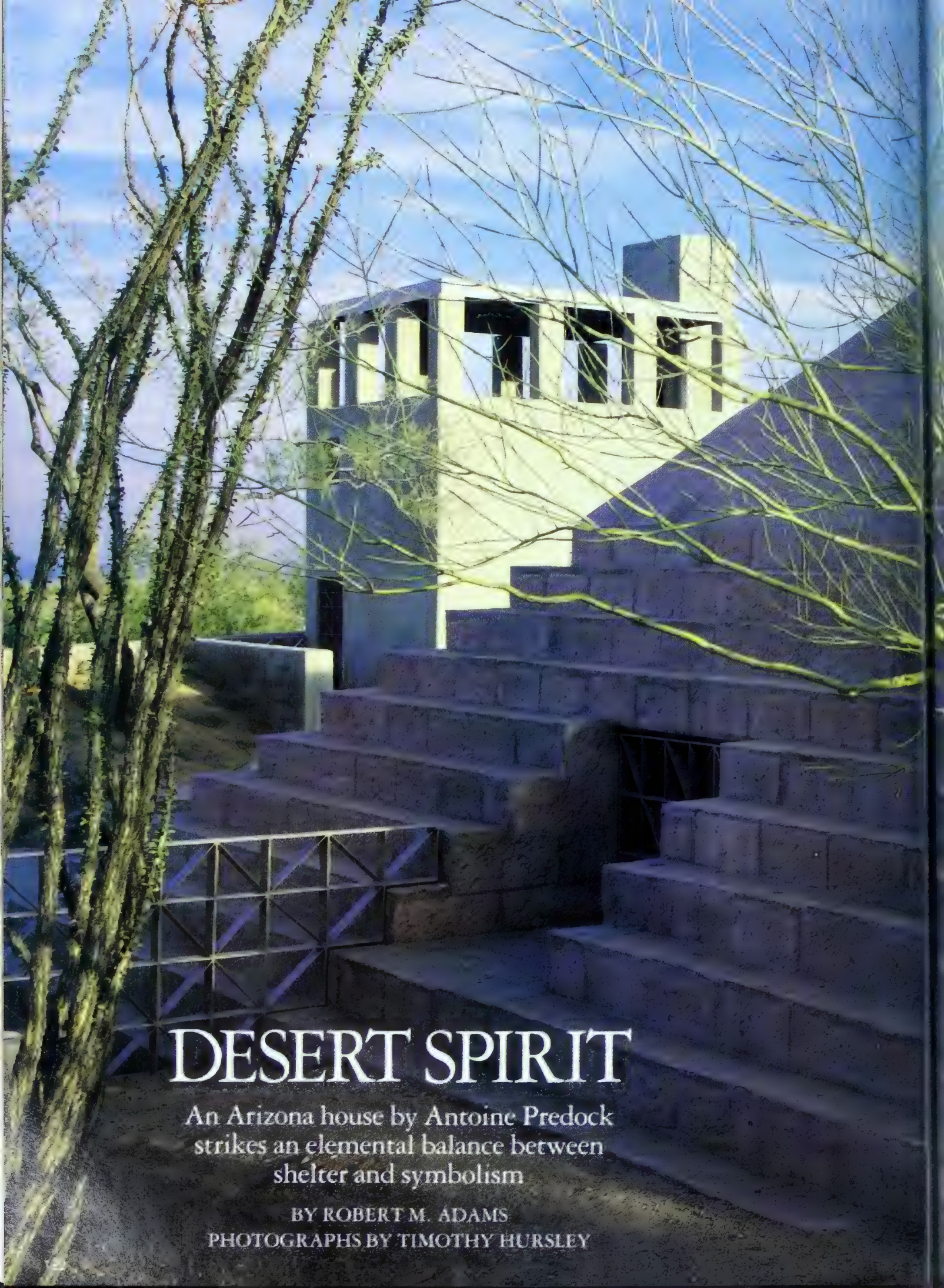
A Chinese glass jar is on an early-19th-century marble-topped English gueridon, *opposite,* in front of an elegant sofa back to back against an identical sofa. To the left a gardenia plant in a copy of a Sèvres cachepot by Minton. *Above:* A magnificent Minton shell is one of a pair on bookcase behind the Georgian pedestal desk. Leather-bound books sit on one of two English mahogany stools. A terra-cotta bust of Louise of Russia is against the Coromandel screen. *Left:* A view from the dining area looking toward the card table in the far left corner.

A detail of fruit from a Frans Snyders. *Right:* In the dining room, English Regency chairs surround the George III table set for dinner. An undecorated Brühl Swan service tureen is on the mantel under Melchior de Hondecoeter's painting of fowl. On the left, a magnificent Snyders *nature morte*, one of four in the room, over a decorated Brühl tureen, also part of the Swan service.









DESERT SPIRIT

An Arizona house by Antoine Predock strikes an elemental balance between shelter and symbolism

BY ROBERT M. ADAMS
PHOTOGRAPHS BY TIMOTHY HURSLEY



Gene Fuller's pyramid study, constructed of native Mexican adoquin stone, has a skylight apex. On the right is the main house, and to the left, the sunset tower.



The entire complex, *left*, set against the mountains behind whose shape the pyramid reflects. *Opposite:* The desert by day from the sunset tower, accessible only through the master bedroom. The painted steel trellis roof creates a complex pattern on the stucco walls.

Sparse, astringent, vast and gritty, a desert environment poses special problems for an architect who wants to build in it. To ward off the ferocious, unremitting sun and heat-drunk earth, he may build a fortress, all blind walls and stony parapets, as if to defy the hostile elements. Or again he may shrink his building into its surroundings, half-burying it in the ground, like the desert wildlife, which hides in holes by day and comes out to prowl only at night. A special condition of desert building is that neither strong nor weak points can be softened by the application of cosmetic shrubbery. Indigenous plants are spiky and scattered; imported vegetation needs constant water and produces an instant, artificial California. Like the bones of the landscape, the building must stand forth in its own structural right—but not too much. Thus the architect balances on a knife-edge between building too forcefully (*against* his surroundings) and building too self-effacingly (so that his work disappears *into* the surroundings). The house built on the outskirts of Phoenix, Arizona, for Gene and Donna Fuller by Antoine Predock not only treads that knife-edge, it transforms the balancing act into a deliberate, graceful dance.

The Phoenix metropolitan area occupies the center of a basin formed by the Salt River on its long journey west, where, after joining with the Gila, it will slide with the Colorado into the Gulf of California. The Fuller house stands to the northeast of the city with a range of sawtooth hills culminating in rocky Pinnacle Peak behind it and with the wide expanse of the valley before it. A dusty panorama by day and a glittering constellation by night, the metropolis spreads out before the house as on a stage; the eye is continually drawn out and away. At right angles to the view, the axis of the building runs roughly southeast to northwest, thus complying with the lie of the land as well as the course of the sun; and this is the normal path by which the structure discovers itself to a visitor.

Seen from behind and above, as one approaches, it appears as a pair of low, flat, tightly closed structures united by a curving loggia and rising at either end to two tower-like pavilions, one for sunrise, the other for sunset. These one-story, semienclosed pavilions, like the rest of the house's exterior, are of stucco in earth colors. In front of the loggia joining the two major units lies a circular stone-paved courtyard with inset pool. Close beside the pool, accessible from within the house but set decisively outside it, is a modest pyramid, a truly domestic-scale pyramid, of massive stone tipped with glass. A first outside impression of the building is thus strongly geometrical; in its two main units the shapes of the house are strongly rectilinear, but those units are drawn together by the curving lines of the loggia, as well as the circular orbits of courtyard and pool. And then there is that strong, simple, but gently cryptic pyramid to one side. It catches one's eye from the first and continues to intrigue one's attention.

The house is entered at its east end, just past the sunrise pavilion, by a doorway leading into a severely linear gallery at the entry of which a small fountain bubbles. It is a block of black polished granite set in a basin of the stone floor; the water doesn't splash around but wells up in a central cup and runs in sheets down the four sides of the block. After the glare of the sun outside, the interior lighting is subdued and mainly indirect; between gurgling water, quiet lights, and the rough flooring of Mexican adoquín stone, one's first impression of the interior is cool, almost cavernous. Leaving the fountain, the water flows in a ruler-straight line down a narrow channel in the center of the stone floor *(Text continued on page 202)*





The water channel making its way through the steps and across the gallery floor overlaid with the shadows of the window grille. *Opposite:* Twin-pierced stone fountain in front of the sunrise pavilion with the channel beyond.





Views by day. *Above:* Stairs leading to the sunrise pavilion; just to the right is entrance to the house. *Below:* Door with pyramidlike lintel leads from gallery, overlaid with shadows from window grilles, to pyramid study.



Views at dawn and dusk. *Above:* The sunset tower and pyramid. *Below:* The fire platform on right, the window and skylight of the pyramid, the grille of the gallery, and the fireplace in the sunset tower.

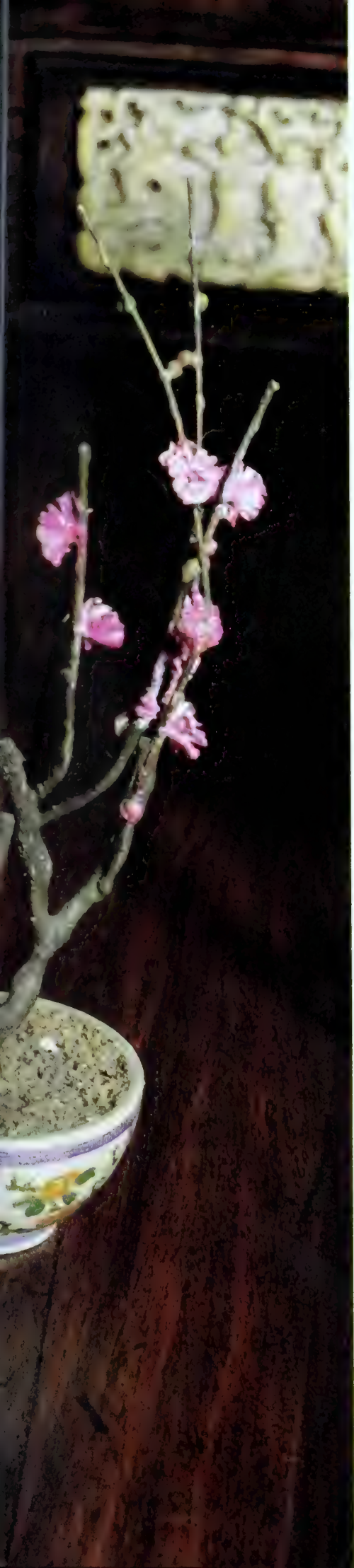




Just to the left of the pyramid, a view of the channel of water emerging from inside the gallery and running to the pool, where it meets the stream flowing from among the boulders. To the left of the pool is the loggia.







TITANIA'S PALACE

BY SHIRLEY GLUBOK
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARIE HOLSTEIN

Queen Mary of England presided at the official opening in London in 1922, using a golden key, and she was the first to sign the guest book, which Charlie Chaplin, Shirley Temple, and William Butler Yeats signed in the years that followed. When Queen Mary observed that there was no running water and no suitable washstand set in the master bedroom, she sent a royal messenger with one made of fine French Limoges porcelain bearing the greeting, "To Queen Titania of Fairyland from Queen Mary of England." Queen Mary was well aware that running water was not necessary in Titania's Palace as the occupants—Titania, her consort, Prince Oberon, and their seven children, four girls and three boys—were fairies, who bathe in the dew drops that gather on rose petals and dye their wings in a rock-crystal basin, then dry them on monogrammed linen towels.

In keeping with the spirit of the palace, fairy-tale and Mother Goose characters as well as creators of fantasy tales enjoy a place of high honor. Names of some of the most famous of these writers—Hans Christian Andersen, Lewis Carroll, Charles Perrault, Edmund Spenser, James Barrie, and William Shakespeare—are inscribed in the ceiling of the throne room.

The vine that grew the pumpkin used by Cinderella's Fairy Godmother to make the horsedrawn coach that carried her to the Prince's ball grows in the garden. And all the king's horses, which couldn't put Humpty-Dumpty together again, also live here, including the white one that carried Lady Godiva at Coventry and the one that was ridden to Banbury Cross with a musical lady on its back. The golden sleigh surmounted by pearls which Santa Claus borrows every Christmas when he slides down chimneys to distribute gifts can be found in the palace as well as the spinning wheel with the spindle on which Sleeping Beauty pricked her finger. A gold horse encrusted with rough diamonds from *(Text continued on page 208)*

After tea, Queen Titania and her Prince Consort, Oberon, play quiet games with the children in the morning room until bedtime. Tonight, when they went off to the nursery, they left their playing cards and banjos strewn about. The butterfly crest on the bench is Titania's symbol; Oberon's is a peacock.





There are no taps on the dark green marble bathtub as fairies bathe in dew. They can dye their wings in the rock-crystal basin and dry them on linen towels, bearing Titania's monogram, which are flattened in the silver handkerchief press from Holland. Sir Neville Wilkinson, the architect-in-chief to Her Iridescence, developed a technique of tiny painted dots to imitate mosaic work and used more than 250,000 in the ceiling alone

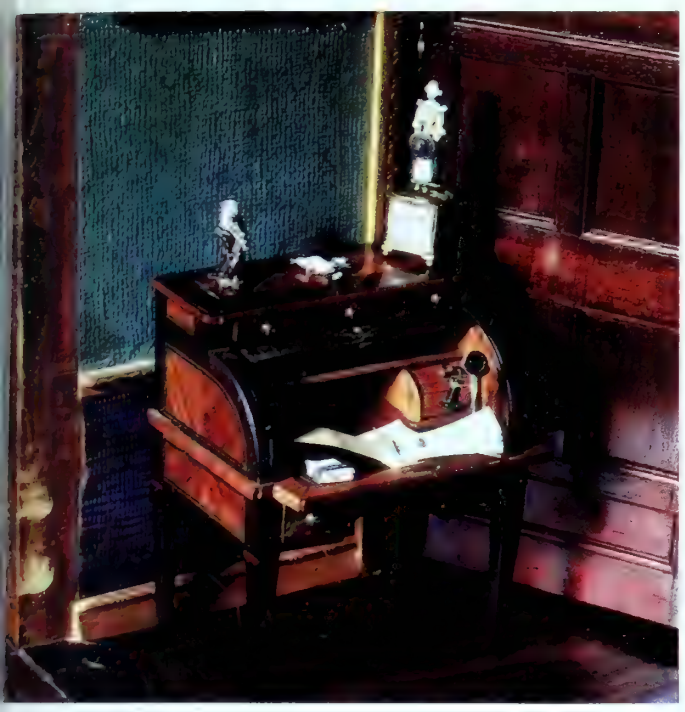








A look into Titania's Palace. *Top left:* There are no knives and forks on the dining table—made from the front of an old grandfather's clock—because fairies live on the smells of fruits and drink nectar. The crystal decanters, tumblers, and wineglasses were made at Bristol and Nailsea more than 150 years ago. *Top right:* Chessboard and cello are always at the ready in Prince Oberon's study. *Above left:* When dances and celebrations are held in the Hall of the Fairy Kiss, an orchestra sits in the musicians' gallery. In a casket on a gold table is a gold-and-enamel collar and diamond star, the insignia of the highest order of Fairyland. A portrait of Queen Mary hangs over the doorway. *Above right:* Among the dolls and toys in the day nursery is a dolls' house, which the fairies enter by nibbling Alice's magic mushroom.







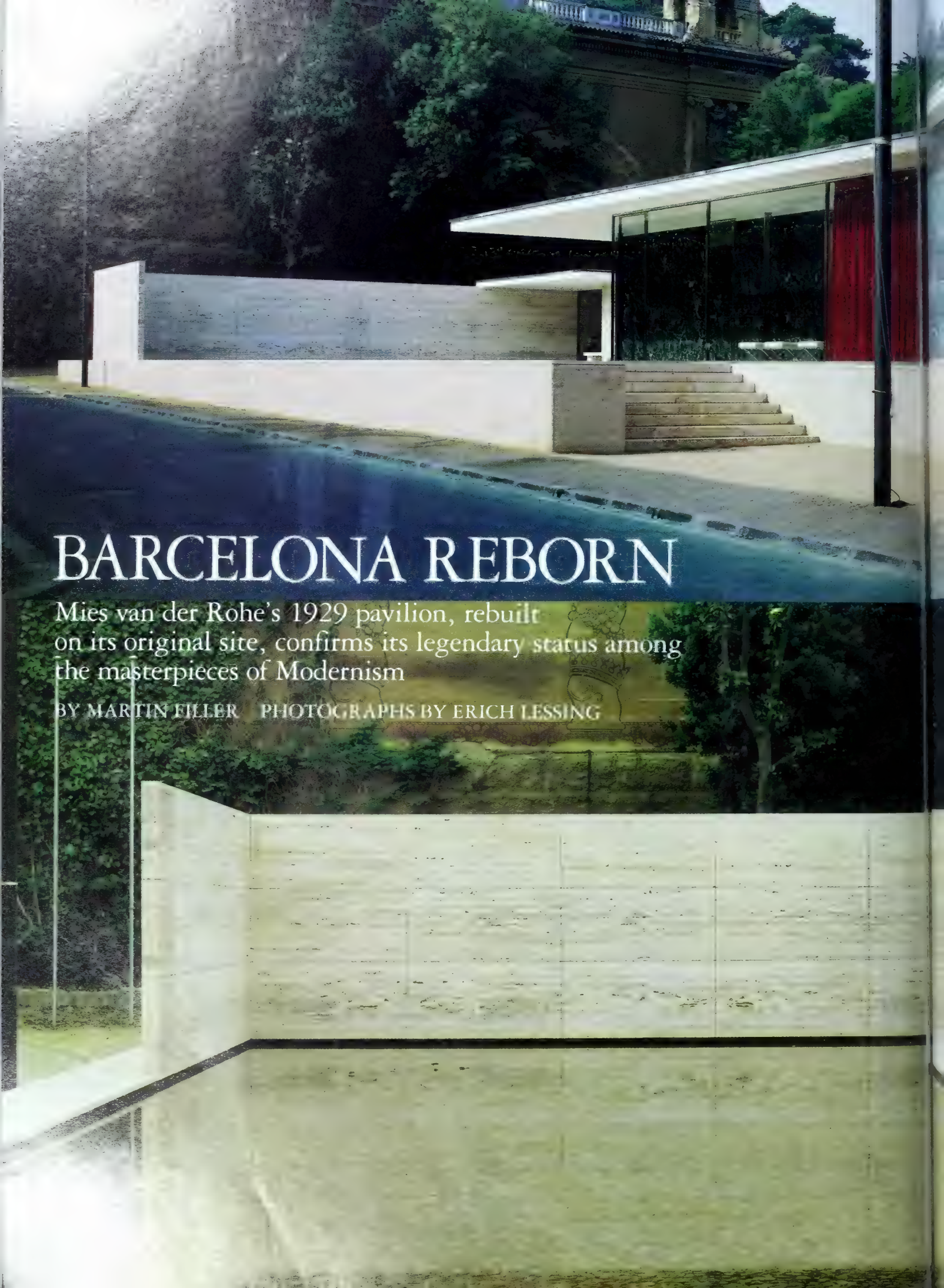


Prince Oberon's study, *top left,* is not just for relaxation. He makes his telephone calls here and writes letters on monogrammed stationery, which he keeps in a cubbyhole in his walnut desk. And like the head of every household, he pays the bills and balances his checkbook. *Top right:* Titania can check her makeup in a gilt-framed mirror in the Royal Bedchamber. Her dressing table holds everything she might need, even hatpins. *Above left:* The visitors' book, its pages no bigger than postage stamps, lies open to Charlie Chaplin's signature on an elaborate stand, set with opals, in the private entrance hall. *Above right:* Titania reigns from an ebony-and-ivory throne adorned with a peacock, made by the court jeweler to Napoleon III, set with diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and sapphires and perching on a pearl.





Only personal friends of the Royal Fairy Family are allowed to come into the palace through the private entrance hall, where the bicycle, bowling balls, and baby carriage are parked. Prince Oberon brought home the gazelle-horn trophies from a hunting expedition in East Africa. The stairways lead up to the Royal Bedchamber, where Queen Titania sleeps in a four-poster bed inlaid with ivory plaques.



BARCELONA REBORN

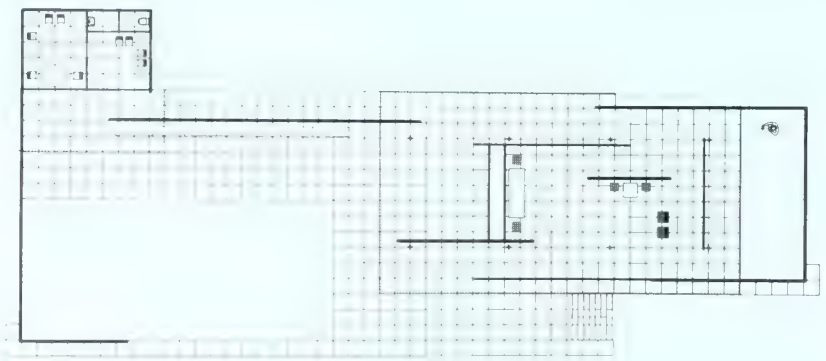
Mies van der Rohe's 1929 pavilion, rebuilt on its original site, confirms its legendary status among the masterpieces of Modernism

BY MARTIN FILLER PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERICH LESSING



The German Pavilion at the Barcelona International Exposition was dismantled shortly after the fair closed and re-created this year in honor of Mies's centenary.





Eight steel columns carry the structure and allow free placement of walls, *top* and *opposite,* which screen but do not enclose space. *Above:* Floor plan shows the pavilion's subtle asymmetry.

For almost sixty years the Barcelona Pavilion was the most famous phantom of modern architecture. Opened to the public on May 26, 1929, it was dismantled just seven months later upon the close of the Barcelona International Exposition, where it was built as the German Pavilion to represent the Weimar Republic. Since then the Barcelona Pavilion (its common name) has grown more celebrated with every person who never saw it. Known to posterity only from a few familiar black-and-white photographs, it nevertheless became a canonical icon of Modernism, admired even by critics otherwise ill-disposed toward the designs of its architect, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe.

As Mies van der Rohe's reputation in recent years began to be called increasingly into question, this missing cornerstone of his career seemed all the more conspicuous for its absence. The renewed interest in Mies on the centennial of his birth, now drawing to a close, has done much to refute the distorted picture of his architecture put forth by revisionist detractors. Yet none of the scores of publications, exhibitions, symposia, and films marking that anniversary is as persuasive in restating his claim to greatness as the reconstruction—or, more accurately, the re-creation—of the Barcelona Pavilion on its original site in the capital of Catalonia.

This remarkable resurrection, first proposed over three decades ago by the Barcelona architect Oriol Bohigas and given Mies's blessing and promise of cooperation a dozen years before his death in 1969, finally answers several of the most tantalizing questions in twentieth-century architecture. How did one actually experience those legendary spaces? Was the Barcelona Pavilion really as great as all that, or was it merely photogenic? What did the colors look like? How does this early breakthrough commission compare with Mies's mature work? Now we know, or have come as close to knowing as we ever shall.

Full-scale replications of historic structures are not uncommon, but for the most *(Text continued on page 216)*

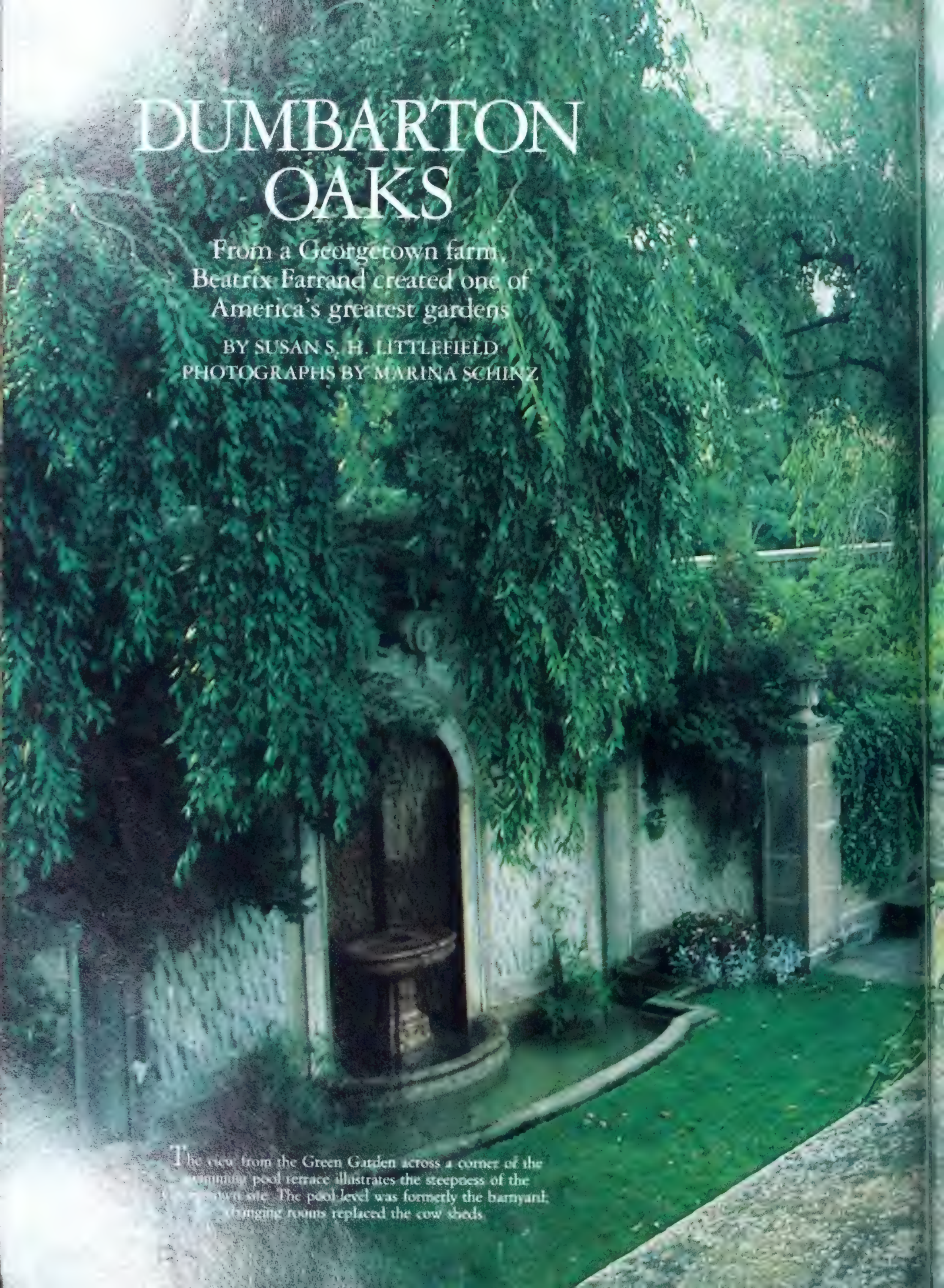


Designed for this building, Mies's Barcelona chair and stools are upholstered in the original white kid. Rising above the pool is a cast of Georg Kolbe's bronze *Morning*. The wall at left is rare onyx done from Algeria.

DUMBARTON OAKS

From a Georgetown farm, Beatrix Farrand created one of America's greatest gardens

BY SUSAN S. H. LITTLEFIELD
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARINA SCHINZ



The view from the Green Garden across a corner of the swimming pool terrace illustrates the steepness of the [illegible] site. The pool level was formerly the barnyard; changing rooms replaced the cow sheds.



Weary of the "professional nomadism" that went hand in hand with diplomatic service, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss decided to buy a farm perched high above Rock Creek in Georgetown. They were acquisitive travelers and their household was becoming increasingly cumbersome to move. Most specifically their growing collection of Byzantine art needed permanent and protective shelter—and Mrs. Bliss wanted a place to put down roots, both literal and figurative. She invited Beatrix Jones Farrand, landscape gardener, to help transform the farm into a proper country estate.

Mrs. Farrand was approaching fifty when Mildred Bliss solicited her assistance, and to an elite group of East Coast clients, she was considered the doyenne of American garden design. Writing in response to an initial visit, Mrs. Farrand accepted the commission and outlined her ideas. She described terraces extending from the north and east sides of the house which would incorporate places for roses, herbs, and flower-filled borders, a swimming pool, a tennis court, and a series of woodland walks—in short, the many features that suited her clients' notion of a country house.

The scheme would have a distinctly Classical flair, with terraced rooms defined by masonry walls, broad steps connecting different levels, and a central walk lined with boxwood. The spaces adjacent to the house would be the most architectural, incorporating brick and finely textured plants chosen to complement rather than compete with the building. Farther into the garden, the materials would be less formal—cut stone, wood, and ironwork combined with looser, more emphatic planting. Gradually the terraces would dissolve into a natural garden developed around the creek and the surrounding woods.

Guided by a vision developed during twenty years of traveling, Mrs. Bliss directed the transformation of Dumbarton Oaks. The garden was to be designed for fall, winter, and spring because, like many Washingtonians, she and her husband planned to spend their summers in more comfortable places. As Mr. Bliss was still very much involved in diplomacy, they needed space for entertaining—rooms outdoors that would extend and soften the severe lines of the Federalist house. Mrs. Bliss had admired many European houses and gardens in the course of her years abroad, collecting ideas and elements that could be adapted to enrich her American garden.

This affection for imported styles was typical of the twenties. It was the era of the American country place, and although some translations were heavy-handed, imaginative interpreters succeeded in combining the garden in a truly innovative style. Such was the case at Dumbarton Oaks, thanks largely to the contribution of Beatrix Farrand.

Formal training was not part of Mrs. Farrand's impressive background. Her tastes in architecture and design were nurtured by her aunt Edith Wharton, the novelist and Classicist who in 1904 wrote a book on Italian villas and their gardens. With Maxfield Parrish's evocative illustrations, Mrs. Wharton's book moved the Classical Revival into the open air, advocating the notion of garden rooms designed as extensions of interior space. Beatrix traveled with her aunt, seeing the best of European architecture and gardens through Mrs. Wharton's discriminating eyes. She visited Gertrude Jekyll at Munsted Wood, admired the plants in Vita Sackville-West's garden at Knole, and met William Robinson.

Horticultural training came in the form of an apprenticeship with Charles Sprague Sargent, director of the Arnold Arboretum and one of the nation's preeminent horticulturists. Sargent was not particularly enthusiastic about design, but he did profess that in dealing with the landscape a designer's role was to "make the plan fit the ground and not twist the ground to fit a plan."

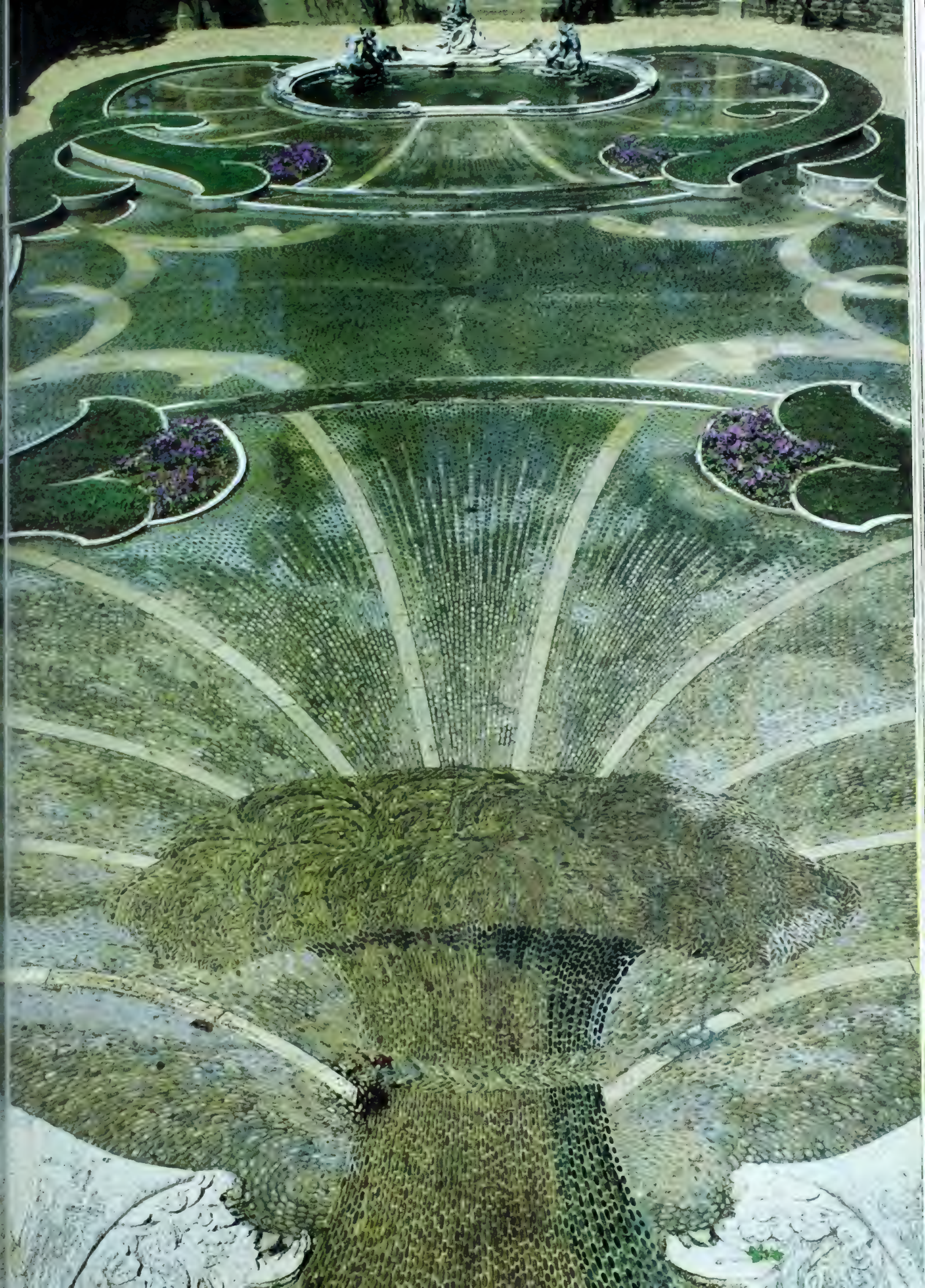


The Pebble Garden, *above* and *opposite*, was a tennis court in Beatrix Farrand's day, when Dumbarton Oaks was a private estate. One of a few sections of the garden that have changed dramatically, it was redesigned with the help of Miss Ruth Havey, who had worked in Mrs. Farrand's office. The sheaf of wheat is from the Bliss family crest.

Armed with his advice, Beatrix Jones left the Arboretum and in 1895 opened an office in her mother's New York house. She called herself landscape gardener, and almost immediately her practice was a success. Within four years, at the age of 27, she joined eight other forward-looking professionals in chartering the American Society of Landscape Architects—all were men, incidentally, and most were significantly older. She continued to use the title landscape gardener, however, perhaps in deference to Professor Sargent.

At Dumbarton Oaks both Mrs. Wharton's and Professor Sargent's influences are apparent. The plan is clearly Classical in inspiration, and though it is impressive, the garden's success lies ultimately in its installation rather than its conception. In the process of translating ideas into reality, Mrs. Farrand clearly did follow Professor Sargent's advice. Rather than impose a formal pattern on the landscape, she wove her plan sensitively into the rugged site. Here her lack of technical expertise may actually have enhanced her artistry, for given a limited facility with drawing, she virtually had to work out her plans on site.

"I honestly have no idea how the terraces are going to work until the grades have been fussed over," she confessed in her initial letter. The result at Dumbarton Oaks is a plan that is remarkably organic, given its apparent formality. Levels and proportions of the various rooms were established by the ancient oaks, elms, maples, and beeches that shaded the hillside; the high-branching canopies lifted eyes above the garden's most awkward grades. In conjunction *(Text continued on page 221)*

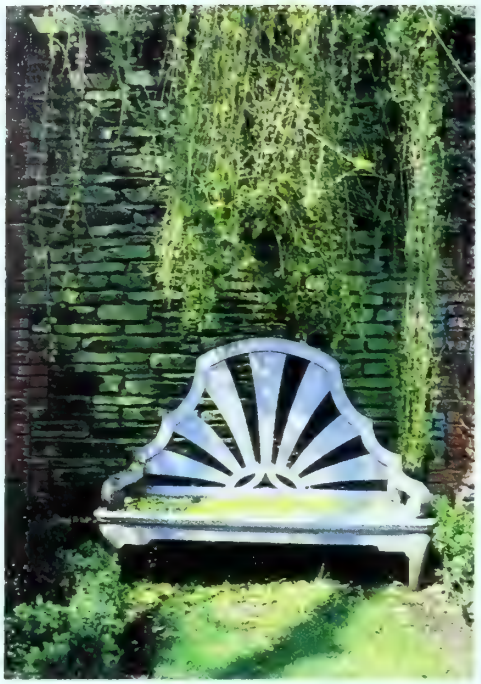




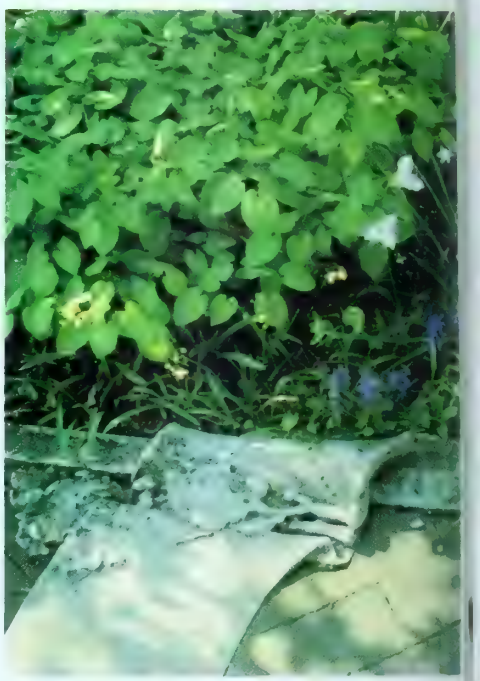
Chrysanthemums as prescribed by Mrs. Farrand for fall on the Fountain Terrace. *Below:* Lovers' Lane Pool and amphitheater nestled between the roots of a beech and a silver maple.



The view along the Box Walk to the Hornbeam Ellipse. *Below:* Forsythia cascading downhill in the Dell toward Rock Creek marked the transition from formal to natural garden.








Finely crafted architectural details abound at Dumbarton Oaks. *Left to right from top:* A lead fountain beneath an arbor. One of the garden's many different bench designs. Aquarius framed in Star Garden wall. Stone finial garlanded in flowers and fruit. Steep stairs wrap around Horseshoe Pool. Stone scrolls step down a sloping brick path. Wisteria arbor softens a terrace wall. Loggia alongside swimming pool. Orangery, recently restored, festooned with creeping ficus.










Materials are skillfully and surprisingly combined. *Left to right from top:* The Urn Terrace overlooks the Rose Garden. Sheered mounds of boxwood complement the roses. Trompe-l'oeil screen terminates a garden axis. Wrought-iron furniture provides shade on a terrace. Carved stone embellishes a brick path. Stone garland spills over a garden wall. Steps with grass treads are hardly visible from house. The North Vista with stepped lawn and deodar cedars. *Overleaf:* Allée of purple-leafed plums between the kitchen and cutting garden.



THE HOUSE OF MONDADORI

Verde Visconti redesigns the Art Nouveau *palazzina* of the Milan publishing family

BY ALAIN ELKANN
PHOTOGRAPHS BY OBERTO GILI



The Art Nouveau *palazzina*—Milan's answer to a New York brownstone—stands on a quiet, aristocratic street in the old part of the city. This four-story house is home to Katherine and Leonardo Mondadori. Though I have spent many happy evenings in this house, in order to properly describe its design, I decided to pay a visit to the person who was responsible. Verde Visconti di Modrone lives in Rome on Via Gregoriana, just down from the Spanish Steps. The late-autumn sunshine filled her apartment as I arrived. She had recently finished the interiors for Liliana Cavani's new movie *Berlin Affair* and, reclining on a sofa, she talked about her work in Milan.

"It was an amusing and interesting challenge, working in the city where my father's family came from and creating the house of an important publisher, who is still a young man." It was Katherine, Leonardo Mondadori's young American wife, who first approached her, asking if she would design only a bathroom. Soon Verde found herself working on the whole house.

"First of all, it was a matter of redoing the *piano nobile,* which was made up of many little rooms. After a lot of work, I made an entrance hall, a library overlooking the street, and a living room overlooking the garden. The library was particularly important."

Leonardo Mondadori suggested to Verde the idea of designing an English-style library, where he could put not only the books he publishes—Mondadori is a huge firm, the Italian equivalent of Time-Life—but also countless art books and catalogues. In recent years Mondadori has become a collector of fifteenth-century drawings and paintings, Futurist works, and modern sculpture, and he believes that part of collecting is having the right books.

"Perhaps the most fascinating part of forming a collection is making choices. You must be able to study the documentation of every piece you consider buying," he told me. His collection is a young and fairly mobile one. Mobile except for such large paintings as Balla's *Elisa in the Doorway* in the library or his *Speed of Automobile and Landscape* in the living room or the enormous painting by Giovanni Agostino da Lodi, *Supper on the Mount,* once attributed to Leonardo da *(Text continued on page 224)*

Balla's *Elisa in the Doorway,* 1904, *opposite,* is in the library. *Above:* A view of the garden and back of the house with Art Nouveau motifs around the third-floor windows.





In the living room, two early-20th-century Indian plantation chairs are on either side of the coffee table designed by Verde Visconti. Flanking the door leading to the terrace and steps down to the garden are 18th-century Roman copies of Chinese vases. The carpet is an 18th-century Ottoman kilim.


EL ARTE HOY
ORIENTE
MANIERISTES
Stella variabile
Gli Ori di Taranto
in Età Ellenistica



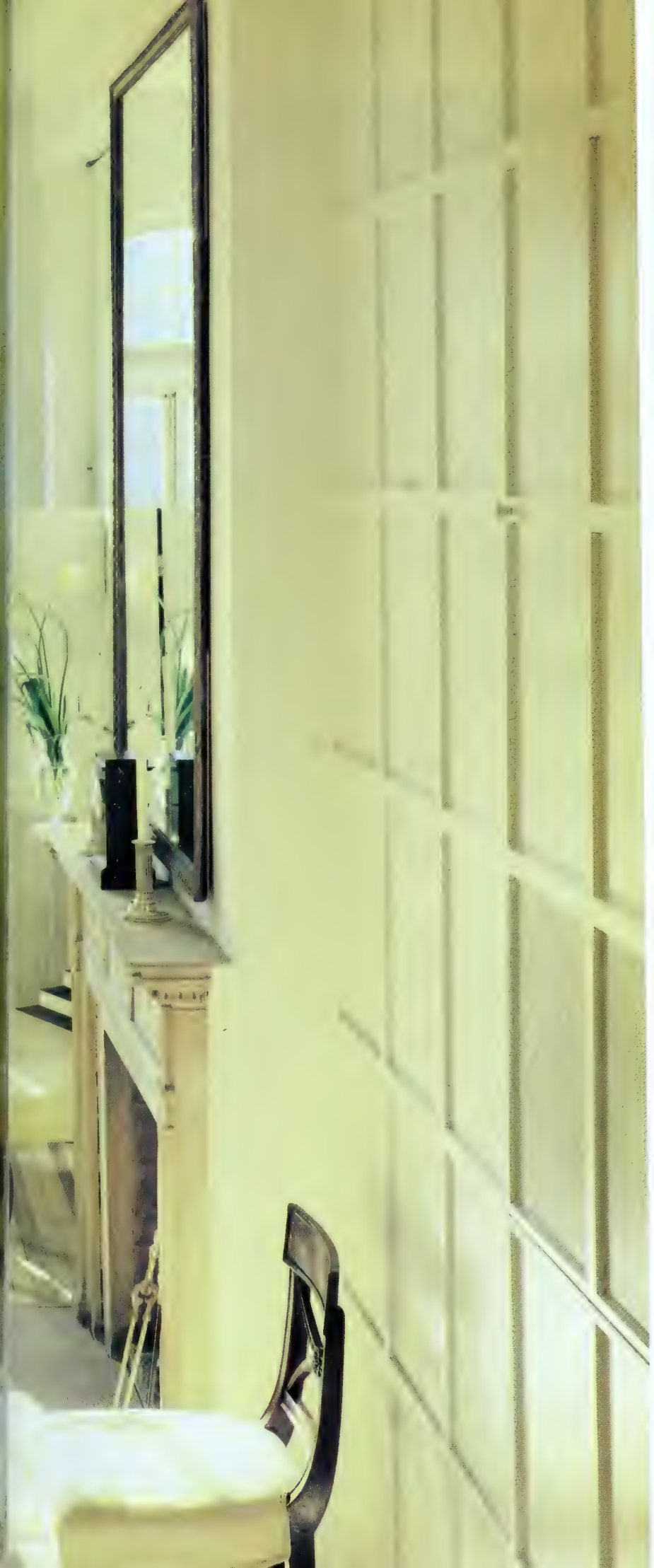
A large down sofa and two club chairs give the Mondadori library a comfortable air. Part of the collection on view here: a putto by Cavalier d'Arpino, 1595–1600, is on the table behind the sofa. Verde Visconti designed the cherrywood bookcases, and on the shelf over the fireplace is a painting by Bartolommeo della Gatta, c. 1400, and to the right a Madonna and Child by Ortolano, 1514–15.



Giovanni Agostino da Lodi's magnificent painting *Supper on the Mount,* 1498–99, dominates the dining room. The column to the left of the Biedermeier chair is actually a light designed by Verde, and the green enameled terra-cotta [illegible] inspired by a







ROMANTIC MINIMALISM

Peter Shelton and Lee Mindel decorate their own architecture

BY STEPHEN DRUCKER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN HALL

Small space with a sense of grandeur: Shelton, Mindel & Associates reworked every part of this apartment to interact with its main asset, a twelve-foot-high living room. The paneled fireplace wall opens to reveal floor-to-ceiling storage; the French 1920s light fixture is alabaster.





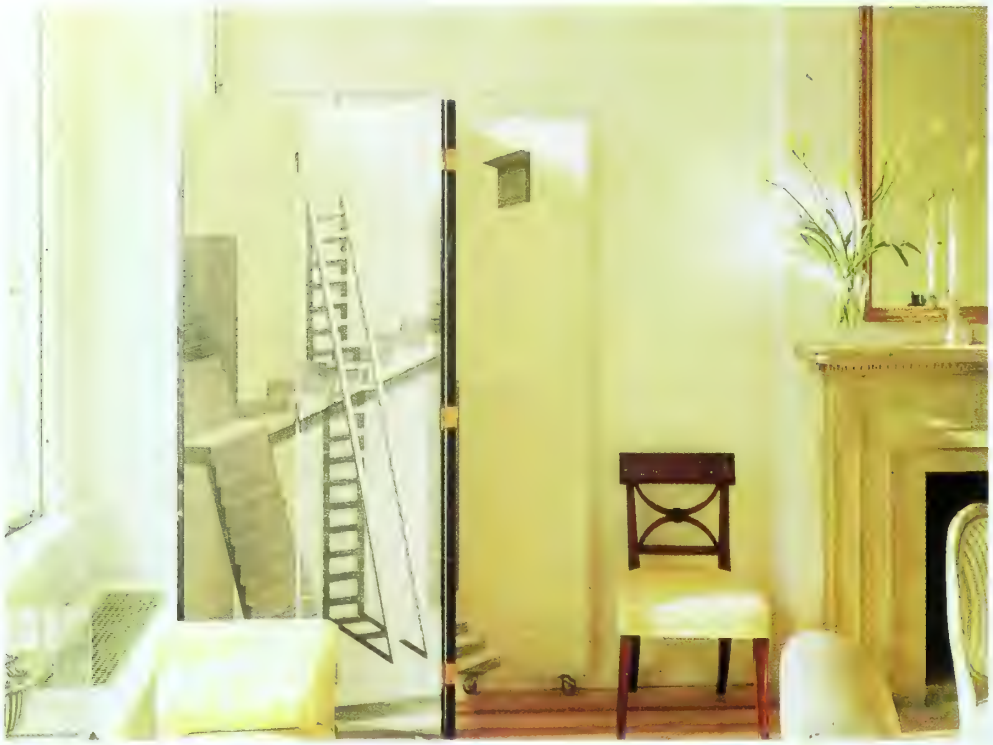
A section of paneling forms both a living-room wall and the library-balcony railing. The side table of cherry and mahogany is one of a line of furnishings by Shelton Mindel for LCS.

Like many architects, Lee Mindel and Peter Shelton tend to describe their work obliquely: "gestures" to this, "references" to that, a lot of "dialogue between the planes." Their work, however, gets to the point quickly. In this apartment, which they recently designed for a young Manhattan gentleman, the message in the air is about architecture and decoration—and how successful the disciplines are when they grow out of a single vision.

As it goes in their profession, Shelton and Mindel really prefer to talk about their architectural achievements. This apartment began as a small, choppy, two-bedroom unit, though with three glorious exposures, three equally glorious arched living-room windows, and the uncanny spatial harmony of a cube. After nine months of renovation, the apartment was still small—only about a thousand square feet—but every square foot expressed a coherent, romantic vision. "A folly," Mindel likes to call it.

"We took it apart and put it back together again," says Shelton. "We wanted to examine the elements and express something greater than the space itself." In

(Text continued on page 210)





The elements of Shelton Mindel style: in the library-balcony, *opposite,* a "turned-back" rug, which plays gold silk fibers against wool, by the architects for V'Soske; in the living room, *above left,* a folding screen by Fornasetti, from Themes & Variations, London; in the dining area, *below left,* a parquet "rug," a new plaster ceiling echoing the prerenovation dimensions of the living room, and an interior window backlighting a collection of black basalt.





KEEPING TRADITION

Decorator Arnold Copper at home on his New England farm

BY ELAINE GREENE PHOTOGRAPHS BY KAREN RADKAI



Part of the original core of a much-enlarged farmhouse, the c.-1700 keeping room has had its woodwork painted a rich earthy orange that enhances whitewashed walls, Cantonware, and antique woods. Arnold Copper is certain the room once contained a sleeping loft with ladder access.





Ten generations ago a William Copper from Oxfordshire settled in Virginia, and there have been Coppers on farms there or in Maryland ever since. Arnold Copper, the descendant in question, grew up on a Virginia farm, and he still regards himself as a man of the country although he is now based in a flat and office on the East Side of Manhattan, practicing as an architect-designer who specializes in historic restoration. For time is measured in year-round weekends and a 160-acre farm in coastal New England, which he shares with a large herd of wild deer, eight Arabian and Appaloosa horses that graze on the pastures he rents out, and his own numerous dogs and cats. Arnold Copper's farmhouse is also a family center, where his mother, siblings, and ten-year-old daughter gather for all the holidays, Christmas being the favorite.

The history of the house goes back almost as far as the colonial Coppers. There was only a keeping room and a small chamber in the earliest days—about 1700, plus or minus a decade—and these remain. Once the big room



was the center of daily life, with its huge fireplace for warmth and for cooking on the hearth and in the beehive oven. It is still the room where host and guests spend the most time.

In 1750 a prosperous dairy farmer incorporated the original two rooms into a symmetrical five-bay, two-story Georgian house. Ninety years later, more rooms were added, as well as a side porch with two-story columns. Finally, in the late 1940s, an architect-owner built on a twenty-by-forty-foot ballroom. Arnold Copper has fur-

Seen through the front door, *opposite,* is the bluish green staircase in the 1750 part of the house. Vigorous colors like this one are now known to be true to the colonial period. *Above:* During the 1940s a large Federal-style ballroom was added to the house. It now functions as a comfortable living room. Behind the New York Empire table, a Federal sofa upholstered in Brunschwig damask. Arnold Copper painted paneling in two strongly contrasting colors after his first one-color scheme proved dull. All flowers by José Vilela.





Family fiddle-thread silver and Coalport china are being readied for a buffet in the mid-18th-century dining room. The table is a Boston piece; the child's chair comes from New England. All seven fireplaces in the house function. The still-life paintings are American.



nished this as a living room, but once, to honor the past, he gave a ball there, ending with a big Southern-style midnight breakfast.

The casual imperfection of this house, which has known almost three hundred years of use, additions, repairs, mistakes, corrections, and compromises revealed in [illegible] jogs and alcoves and mismatched floors, is a [illegible]asure to the designer. He explains, "In pres[illegible]k, I am required to follow strict conventions [illegible], but a house like this allows me to decorate as I please." Thus he felt free to use curtain types invented 150 years after a room's date of construction, to place a bed made for a fourteen-foot-high room under and almost touching an eight-foot ceiling, to paint his staircase one strong color—treads and risers, balusters and railing, and even the upstairs landing.

Speaking of his decorating style, Arnold Copper says his rooms are sometimes described as "looking unfinished," which he considers a compliment. He regards interiors as a process, changing as life within them changes.



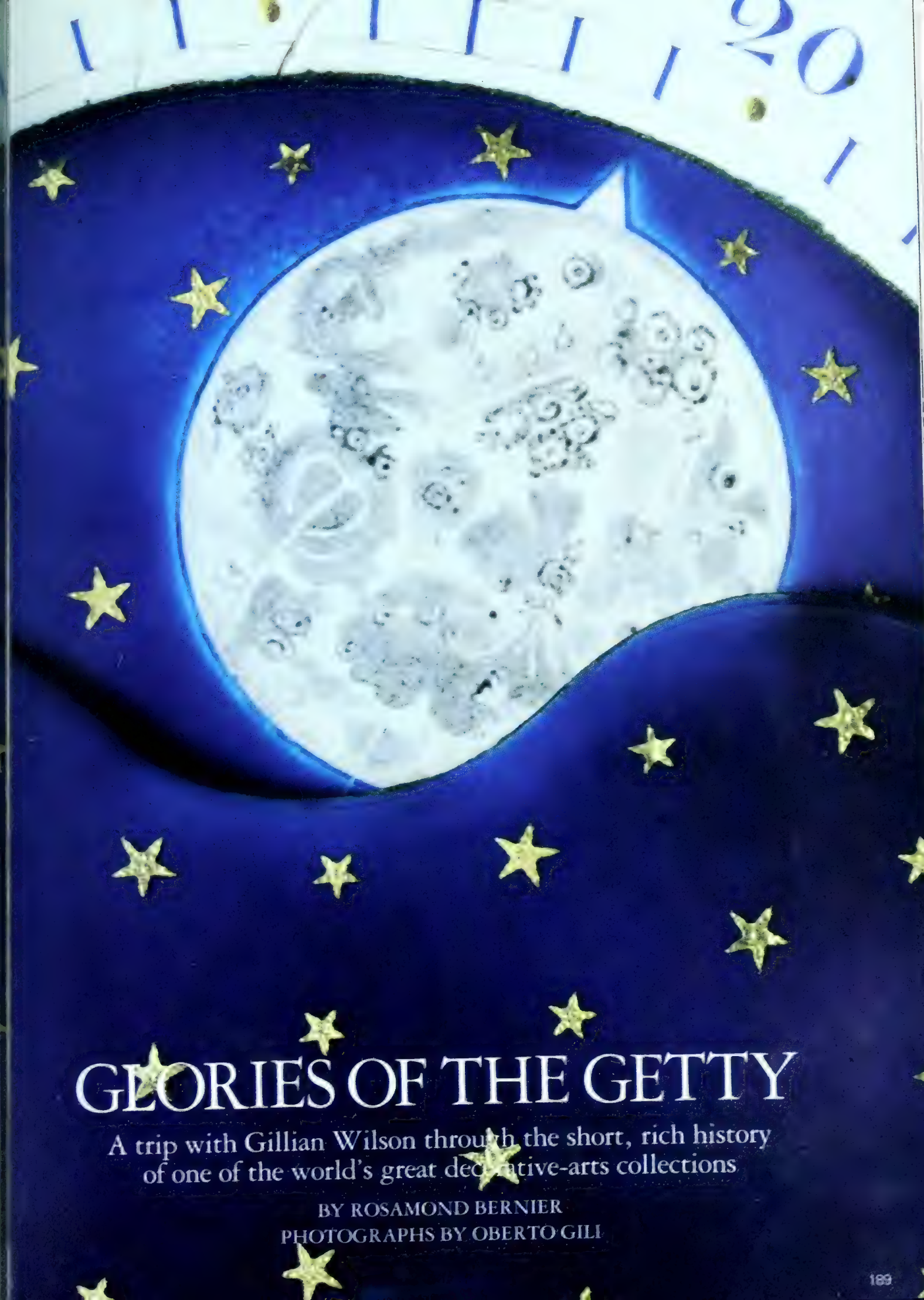




"If you come back here in a year or two, you may see that I have rebuilt the plaster ceiling missing in the dining room, and some of the furniture will surely have been moved around and some materials replaced." Nevertheless, you would undoubtedly see the stylistic unity that is such a strong feature of Arnold Copper's house, a unity resulting from his almost exclusive use of American antiques (inherited and collected), a unity owing most of all to an inbred knowledge of what a nice old farmhouse ought to look and feel like. □ *Produced by Babs Simpson*

In a guest room, *left,* antique posts and new head- and footboards make a modern-size double bed. Fringed canopy is real fishnet. China Trade recamier has its old caning. *Top:* Looking from one of the horse pastures through a hedgerow to the 1760 façade. Porch columns at left flank 1840 wing. *Above:* Master bedroom contains a Cuban bed handed down through Arnold Copper's New Orleans maternal branch. Finials are missing, but replacements plus canopy are planned. Empire chest of drawers from Massachusetts.





GLORIES OF THE GETTY

A trip with Gillian Wilson through the short, rich history of one of the world's great decorative-arts collections

BY ROSAMOND BERNIER

PHOTOGRAPHS BY OBERTO GILI



As a collection, it has everything that could argue the case for the French decorative arts as they existed at the highest level in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It has that paragon of pride and splendor, the "cabinet on stand" that was made in Paris in the late 1670s. Probably designed by the royal cabinetmaker André Charles Boulle for Louis XIV, it is the epitome of absolutism—"L'État, c'est moi" made visible. It has a commode by Cressent, tapestries from Beauvais, a mantel clock made for Louis XVI and formerly in his bedroom in Paris, chairs from Versailles and Fontainebleau, silver by Thomas Germain, a porcelain watering can from Vincennes, and the prettiest imaginable porcelain chamber pot from Chantilly. It has French-mounted Oriental porcelain, a planisphere clock of great size and grandeur, a set of early-eighteenth-century bed hangings, a porcelain bust of Louis XV from Mennecy, a mechanical writing and toilet table by Jean-François Oeben, and a pair of commodes stamped "B.V.R.B." (Bernard van Risenburgh). Other countries have contributed to it, but fundamentally it is a French collection of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with all that that implies in the way of majesty and seduction, ingenuity and wit, distinction of design and incomparable craftsmanship.



The remarkable thing about the collection in question, which belongs to the J. Paul Getty Museum in Malibu, California, is that it has been formed very largely within the past fifteen years by a young Englishwoman who had almost no formal training in the decorative arts—or in anything else—and yet has made herself the peer, and the admired colleague, of the foremost living experts in the field. Her name is Gillian Wilson. What she has done called for energy, sensitivity, total recall of detail, hard work, persistence, and diplomacy. In person she is feisty, free-spoken, ready to make fun of herself. But the collection itself reveals her as a dedicated scholar with something that not all scholars have—a preeminent eye for quality.

Gillian Wilson never took an examination in art history, let alone qualified for a degree. The only professional training that she ever had was as a botanical illustrator, and when she left art school, she had no job and very little chance of getting one. "My sister was desperate for me to get one. Finally she found an ad—in *The Spectator,* I think—which said, 'Educated art student required to be textile conservation officer, grade 3, at the Victoria and Albert Museum.' So she washed my face, put me into a suit, and sent me off. I was the youngest of the fourteen people interviewed, but I got the job. And I was very good at it, because I had infinite patience with the teeny stitches, but I got bored. And when I noticed that there were some good-looking fellows in the furniture department, I thought I'd go there instead.

"So I had an interview with Peter Thornton and ended up in the furniture department, along with H. D. Molesworth, the Knight of Glin, Peter Thornton, and Derek Shrub. I couldn't even tell oak from walnut at that time. I learned on the job, which is the only way you can learn something that isn't taught anywhere. So here I am, without a B.A. or an M.A., let alone a Ph.D. I did it because I wanted to do it, so I had to be inventive about it. I have all kinds of peculiar ideas about Furniture, The History of—all made up by myself.

"I did go to evening classes in art history at London University, though, because if you are a decorative-arts person, you have to know about paintings, drawings, sculpture, architecture (inside and out)—the whole lot. You need social history, too. If you don't know what the Treaty of Nijmegen was and what the Sumptuary Edicts were, you're not going to understand what went on at all.

"After the V&A, I went to the Met for a year, as a fellow, and then I came to California. The collection, such as it was then, was in an old ranch house—above the site of the present museum—which had just two rooms for galleries. They were open to the public, for tax reasons, but nobody ever came. It was an incredibly ugly house, full of nylon velvet, all shocking pink and white, with white busts by Hiram Powers. Mr. Getty may have spent the night there, once, but he never came again.

"In the seventies, when I began to buy for him, everything was shipped direct to the ranch without his seeing it, except in photographs. At that time he was interested in large Rococo objects. Anything less than four feet wide he referred to as 'bric-a-brac.' There were no clocks, no porcelains, no mounted objects. Just marble slabs for ever and ever, on large commodes. 'Why can't we buy small things?' I asked. 'Because they get stolen,' he said. He never got used to rising prices either. 'Why, in 1938. . .,' he'd say, and it became clear that he knew the price of everything that he'd ever bought, down to the very last penny, and don't think he didn't remind you.

"I didn't meet Mr. Getty for two years. For one thing, I was in the United States on a tourist visa, I'd been turned down for a green card, and I couldn't get out. But then a whole roomful of the most beautiful French boiseries burned up in a truck, in the middle of Texas, when it was

A detail of a c.-1785 mantel clock attributed to Pierre-Philippe Thomire, *preceding pages, left,* shows one of two figures flanking a cylindrical marble clock that rotates with the hours. *Preceding pages, right:* A dial indicates the phases of the moon in this detail of a *pendule squelette* (skeleton clock), c. 1790–1800, displayed, *above,* on a secretaire attributed to Adam Weisweiller, c. 1780 (part of the Getty's superb group of furniture with Sèvres plaques). *Opposite:* In subterranean storerooms new treasures await their turn for display.

way from New York to Malibu by road. It was a lerful room, not very high, from an entresol. To find another one of the same size, I had to go to Paris. So I got a special parole from the U.S. government, and in that way I came to meet Mr. Getty in London.

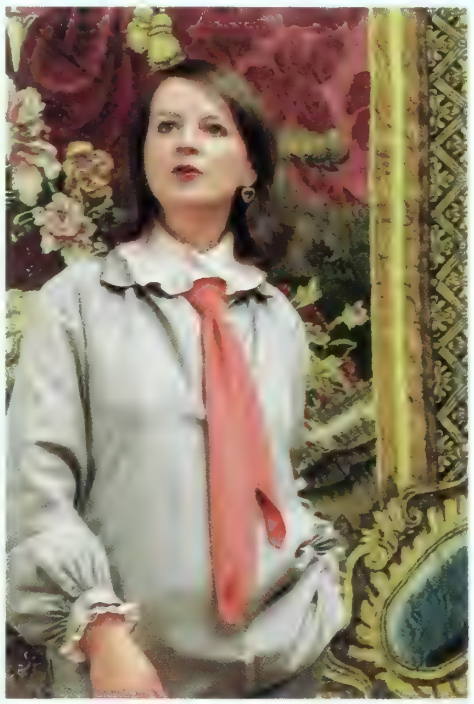
"I had been told that if he was bored he would exert the prerogative of the very rich man and walk out of the room. Actually he kept me three hours. He was testing me all the time, and when he wanted to talk about something, there was no stopping him. He was very fired up at that time about a certain carpet. I didn't want to talk about it because I knew it would make trouble, so I kept changing the subject, and he kept saying, 'As I was saying about that carpet . . .,' and I had to answer and go on answering till he got the answer he wanted.

"Now that I had been to see him we began to work directly together. And then the midnight oil began, and the going to Sutton Place (his house outside London) to visit him. He didn't go to bed till three or four in the morning, and you had to stay up because he might summon you at any time.

"I wish now that I had asked him more about his collection and why he formed it. He was always saying, 'I've bought enough. It's time to stop. My collection is complete, and it's costing me too much money.' But then he'd also tell us that he wasn't going to leave the museum any money, so we'd better buy while we could. There were probably two reasons for that. Rich old men sometimes do things like that because it's fun. But the other reason was that if we'd known how much money we were going to get, we would have stopped bothering him and just gone away till he died. The truth is that he *liked* to be bothered. He enjoyed the struggle. He *liked* to quote the prices in 1938. It was part of the fun.

"So we believed him. And then, when I was in Paris one day, I heard that he had died. I was traveling with my colleague and mentor Theodore Dell, who's been cataloguing the decorative arts in the Frick Collection for years. He's one of the kings of French furniture. We walked about Paris, rather gloomy and upset, and we talked about how wonderful it would be if Mr. Getty left us just one million a year to buy things. Just one million for the whole museum, I meant. Then we called on one or two dealers, who weren't sure whether we were the nouveaux riches or the nouveaux pauvres, and they told us that the will would be read in three days' time.

"Three days later we opened the paper. There across the top were photographs of his legatees—wives and ladyfriends in descending order of munificence—and then near the bottom there was a throwaway note to the effect that the residue of the estate was to go to the Getty Museum. It turned out to be 11.8 percent of Getty Oil Company stock. We called the museum, and all we could hear was the clink of champagne glasses and the screeches of laughter. I wish I'd known what he thought he was doing. He'd had us build this teeny little museum, tiny little library, no parking spaces. He knew how much money there was. He knew what the tax laws were. But we were dealing with the richest man in the Western Hemisphere, and he was our boss. It was frightening.



Gillian Wilson, *above,* the curator of the Decorative Arts Collection. *Opposite:* This majestic cabinet on stand, c. 1675–80, epitomizes the grand Boulle style. On top of it stands a garniture of Chinese Kangxi period (1662–1722) vases. At left is a pedestal clock attributed to André Charles Boulle.

"He made three separate collections. Why? Probably it was because he was used to the dukes and duchesses of England, and he collected in the fields that they had collected—Greek and Roman antiquities, French furniture, old master paintings. Of course he was very much influenced by the Wrightsmans. He knew Charlie, and he knew that they had a great collection of French furniture. So he bought haphazardly, and then he had to deal with three pointy-faced curators who were pushing and pushing him to form a serious, sensible, representative collection.

"He never came to see what we had bought, or even to see the new museum, much as he enjoyed seeing movies of its being built. (He particularly liked running them backward so that the cement flowed back into the mixer. He never tired of that joke.) A fortune-teller had told him that he would die if he ever crossed the ocean, and to avoid flying, so he never did. He even drove from London to Saudi Arabia. She also told him that he would die after his sixth marriage, so he took care to stop at number five.

"And then there we were with all this money. If the trustees hadn't got Harold Williams to help them, heaven knows where we'd be now.

"There was a great time, after the will was announced, when we were the 'richest museum in the world' and we actually had no money at all. (The will still was not settled.) There grew up this myth of us buying everything, when in fact we weren't buying anything. Even now, I have photographs in my desk of objects worth $7 million and I only have $1 million to spend. Things are coming out of cupboards, because we're known to be rich, and I can't possibly buy all that I'd like. So they get sold elsewhere.

"It's absolute nonsense that we always beat down the opposition at auction. Recently I lost three things at auction. It only goes to show that my bids are too conservative. But I think the trustees like us to fail at auction sometimes. I think that Harold Williams might quite like it if they announced when *(Text continued on page 200)*





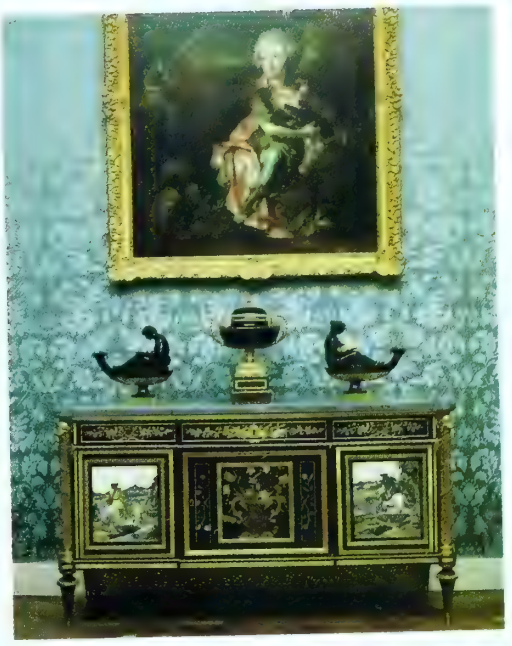
J. Paul Getty himself bought a c. 1735 chair, *opposite*, whose arms have lidded pockets lined with velvet, and a regal Savonnerie carpet, c. 1665, listed in the inventory of Louis XIV. *This page:* Detail of coffer on stand attributed to André Charles Boulle: oak veneered with brass, pewter, tortoiseshell, ebony.





This room suggests the quintessence of 18th-century France. Painted-and-gilded oak paneling was once in a house in the Place Vendôme. Among objects on desk in foreground, attributed to André Charles Boulle, are exceedingly rare gilt-bronze candlesticks made in Paris in 1690. Beauvais tapestries, 1750, are *Toilet of Psyche* and *Psyche at the Basket Weavers,* both after Boucher. Commode at left against back wall is attributed to Joseph Baumhauer; the one at right is stamped Delorme. Four wall lights in room, attributed to the *maître bronzier* Jacques Caffiéri, were taken from the Royal Collection by Louis XV's daughter Louise Elizabeth to decorate her summer palace near Parma.





A pair of serene decorative figures symbolizing Study, *above* and in detail *left*, were modeled after biscuit figures by Louis-Simon Boizot in 1780 for Sèvres. They rest on a commode made in 1788 by Guillaume Beneman. Above them hangs a portrait by Largillière of a boy in Roman costume, thought to represent Louis XV.

tinued from page 192) we were the underbidder.

"You have to realize we're different from any other institution. We are starting almost from scratch. The Met gets things given to it, but as far as I can see, they haven't bought a stick in years. Cleveland buys very little, but very well. Kansas City buys very little, but when they do, it's something super. But I started from nowhere, almost, in 1971.

"I don't have things sent on approval, because I don't think it's fair to the object. So when I'm presenting an object to the trustees, I use color slides and a lot of fast talk. You also have to realize that there's hardly a piece of French furniture that hasn't been fiddled with in some way. One or two things are absolutely pristine, but usually you have to use your intuition. And your intuition can be wrong. When Otto Wittmann was acting director here, he said that every curator worth his salt should make a few mistakes. So you grit your teeth and hope, and sometimes you have to add a few question marks to the label.

"People say that reading my labels is like reading *War and Peace,* but I don't care. I finally reached my ambition when the labels for the gold boxes were bigger than the boxes themselves. The point is that if the public wants to know, it's all there. If they don't want to know, they don't have to read it. It's an old tradition, ingrained in me since my days at the V&A in London."

If pressed, Gillian Wilson will admit that certain things in the collection stand out. Sometimes they are quite small, like the reading-and-writing table, a bare 25 inches high and 19 inches wide by 14 deep, that was made for Louis XIV and is oak veneered with ivory, blue-painted horn, and ebony. There are the four gilt-bronze wall-lights by François Thomas Germain which belonged to Louis XVI. There is the Savonnerie screen with its panels of carpet to designs of animals after Desportes and the great *Char de Triomphe* tapestry made by the Gobelins factory for Louis XIV after a design by Charles Le Brun and still with its original number and date on the back.

"I have my own favorites, but that is say that they are the best things. how can you possibly say that ything that was produced in one city, Paris, where



Porphyry urn with gilt-bronze mounts, Paris (possibly Italian), c. 1765–70.

the taste changed every twenty years? Just lately we bought a garniture made for Louis XVI, which one of the Rothschild maids must have dropped a bit because it needs a little work. It's Sèvres and very hideous, with *Les Aventures de Télémaque* all over it, as usual. As I said to the trustees, we all know that Louis XVI had no taste at all, but this is a piece that he owned.

"I have to grit my teeth when it comes to buying Rococo or late Neoclassical. Oh God, I think, I have to buy that little table that belonged to the Grand Duchess Maria Feodorovna of Russia. I think it's indescribably boring. But if I only bought what I really liked, the collection would be even more eccentric than it is already."

Richard Meier has yet to divulge any of his plans for the new Getty Museum, but the galleries devoted to the decorative arts are bound to pose problems peculiar to themselves. Like many another professional, Gillian Wilson has very decided ideas about the relationship of architect to curator. "It's easy to make a paintings gallery. You just make a rectangle gallery and hang the paintings in it. But there's no way to display the decorative arts except in some kind of historical setting—or, at the very least, with a sense of historical scale. You can't treat the decorative arts as single items, as 'works of art.' Our objects are not like paintings, not like antiquities, not like a great piece of sculpture—things that can stand up on their own. They relate to one another, to a period, a taste, and a specific interior architecture. They always have. I don't like furniture put on a carpet, and I don't like it put on a plinth, because the scale is all wrong. But then people were much smaller in those days—Louis XIV was five feet four, I think—so maybe it's all right. But furniture on a plinth is not furniture at all, but something on display.

"I have very old-fashioned ideas. I loved it when we had damask on the wall. It was a dreadful day when they cut it all down and painted everything beige. Any little pigment is preferable, especially if you have acoustic tiles and strange dung-colored carpet. Anyway, it's no good trying to imagine what the new building will be like. . . ."

The Getty is a new museum, and potentially a great museum, and in its new home on what is now a bald mountain it will have a public that will come from all over. "I was taught three basic rules at the V&A. Number one is that the curator must care for and preserve the objects. Number two is that we must care for the public and educate them. Number three is to keep working at your own research and your catalogues. Numbers two and three often get turned around—lots of curators care more about their research on the collection than they do about the public, and for that reason American museums invented the Education Department, so that the poor curators don't have to trail around with gangs of schoolchildren anymore and can concentrate on the knowledge in-depth, which they were supposedly hired for. Most curators—in England anyway; maybe it's different here—don't really, deep down *really,* believe in the public.

"They try harder here, when the museum is funded by public taxes. That isn't the case with the Getty, but even here we know that the museum is for the public and not just for us and our friends. So we have programs going out into the schools where the art budget is the first thing to be cut, and we try to get the children to understand about art and come to museums and have a good time and not roar through the galleries shouting and sticking their chewing gum under the furniture. It's not easy. They shouldn't be bored, but they shouldn't run wild either. To catch their interest is very difficult."

There would be no problem catching their interest if Gillian Wilson took them through the decorative-arts galleries. Every last firedog gets up and barks, figuratively speaking, at her approach, and if the bookcases could fly open, the chandeliers come ablaze, and the clocks chime in unison, we may be sure that they'd do it. Piece after piece in her collection is "one of a kind"—but then so is she herself. □

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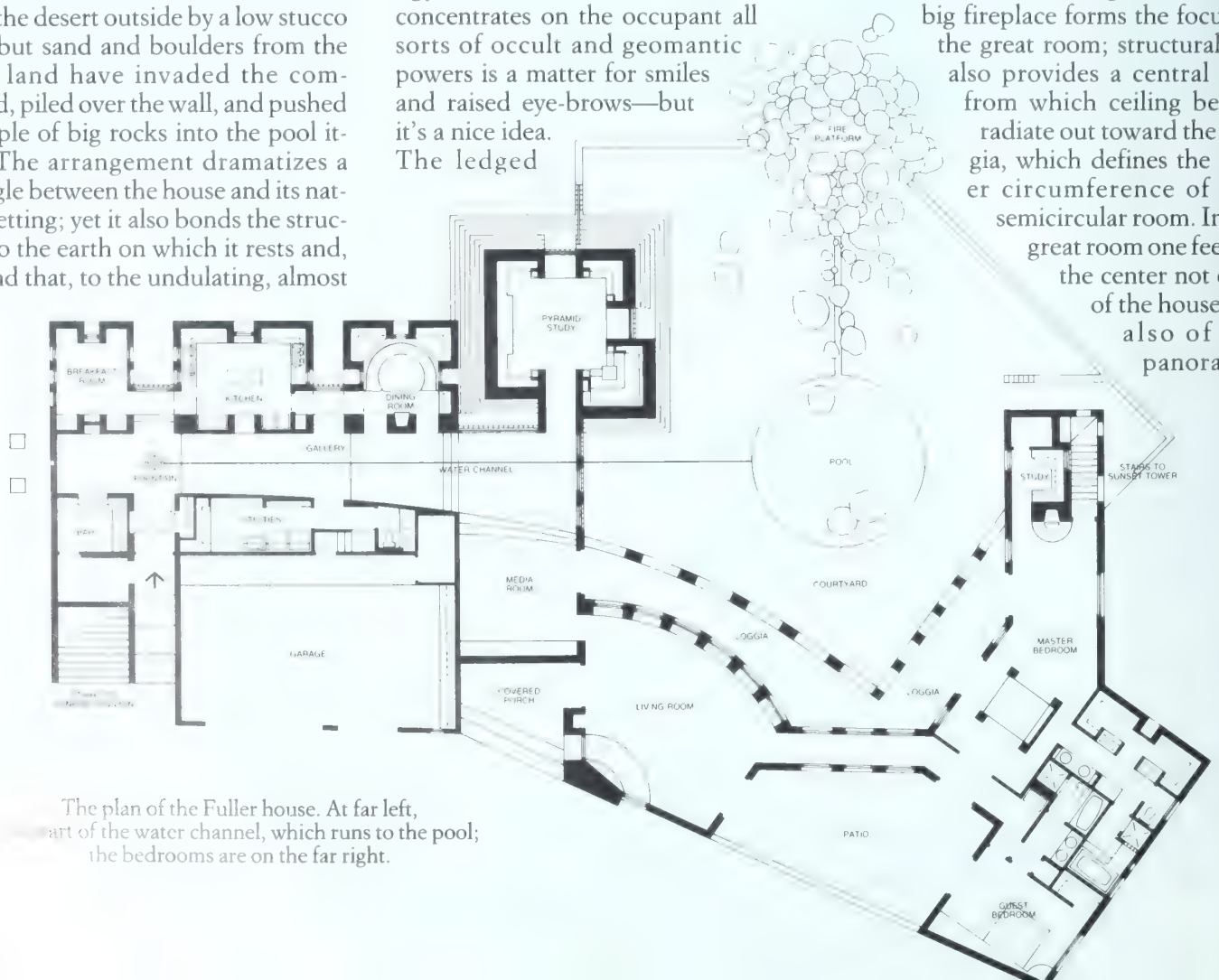
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(continued from page 134) leading toward the windows, at the far end of the gallery, which provide its chief source of light. Everything leads one gently in that direction. There are practical rooms on the left—a breakfast room, a kitchen, a small dining room—but visually the sweep of wall is hardly broken by their entries. A gradual curve in the right-hand wall of natural redwood allows the gallery to widen slightly as it approaches the source of light, and two sets of low steps in the floor increase one's sense of following the water flow downward and onward. The stream finally passes under an outer wall and empties into the pool outside. It is a very modest stream of water, but its precise course defines this axis of the house, defines even more strongly a contrast with the arid landscape outside, and intimates by its not quite soundless flow the movement of an underground river. As one follows the current of water toward the lighter and more open spaces of the house, that inside-outside contrast is underlined by a special feature of the pool and courtyard. Both are surrounded and set off from the desert outside by a low stucco wall, but sand and boulders from the open land have invaded the compound, piled over the wall, and pushed a couple of big rocks into the pool itself. The arrangement dramatizes a struggle between the house and its natural setting; yet it also bonds the structure to the earth on which it rests and, beyond that, to the undulating, almost limitless desert. In practical terms the pyramid, which stands as it were in an angle between the pool and the desert, serves as Mr. Fuller's office; it can't help reminding one, as well, of certain Egyptian structures, which also stand between a mythical river and an ocean of endless sand.

About the slightly raised, supremely open courtyard, there is something half-ceremonial. At its outer edge is a small platform for fire; it could serve practical purposes, but in another perspective it could be seen as a sacrificial altar. And whether or not one immediately recognizes what is going on, a coming together at this point of the four elements—earth, air, fire, and water—is by no means accidental. The presence of the nearby pyramid enlists all sorts of extra associations. Not only is it a solid bastion against the elements and a positive statement of human design against natural encroachments; with its base planted foursquare on the earth and its apex pointing toward the stars it is an ancient emblem of civilization itself. Whether, as current mythology has it, the form collects and concentrates on the occupant all sorts of occult and geomantic powers is a matter for smiles and raised eye-brows—but it's a nice idea. The ledged courses of the lower pyramid provide splendid seating for the consumption of predinner drinks while one watches the sunset.

Although at first glance the pyramid seemed a picturesque curiosity, actually its shape resonates in all sorts of interesting ways through and around the house, making it a kind of gnomon, or indicator. Several of the jagged mountain peaks behind the house repeat the pyramid's shape; indoors the brass shades, which direct the indirect lighting up to the ceiling, are inverted pyramids, and a pair of lights within a recessed rectangle, when lit at the same time, create an unexpected triangle of shadow on the wall above them. The owners are still entertaining themselves by seeking out unexpected and surprising echoes of the pyramidal shape throughout their house.

Behind the curve of the loggia lie the main living quarters—bedrooms, baths, and the chief indoor living rooms. There are three of the last, closely adjoining but quite distinct: a media room, a small conversation room, and the central great room. A big fireplace forms the focus of the great room; structurally it also provides a central pier from which ceiling beams radiate out toward the loggia, which defines the outer circumference of this semicircular room. In the great room one feels at the center not only of the house but also of the panorama,



The plan of the Fuller house. At far left, part of the water channel, which runs to the pool; the bedrooms are on the far right.

Meadow Song



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DESERT SPIRIT

the outward view is concentrated. Through a full array of windows, vision passes through a second, aligned set of openings the other side of the loggia and so out across the valley. By contrast, the windows of the other rooms making up this wing of the house are directed mainly toward the rear.

A spectacular feature of the master bedroom stands in the center away from all the walls; it is a massive four-poster of plaster-finished wood, with a canopy, built floor-to-ceiling into the structure of the house. Like the bed of Odysseus in Homer's poem, it's not lightly to be moved from room to room, but it gives to this largely functional unit of the house a sudden fine excess of solidity. Ancillary rooms off the master bedroom are a bath and a small office for Mrs. Fuller's record- and bookkeeping work. Above the office, but independently accessible, the sunset tower, partly shaded from the daytime sun, includes a small fireplace to keep one warm during night watches.

Like all residences in its climatic zone, the Fuller house is built in good measure defensively against the heat of the sun. Many of the walls are windowless, many of the windows shaded by overhangs. The pyramid itself is largely blind, except for its glass apex and a couple of small sunken windows. This filtering of light from the outside in is a striking feature of the construction. For example, the steel trellises above the pavilions, painted a light umber, serve only partly to exclude the sun; what they admit inscribes fascinating and constantly changing patterns of light and shade across the walls and floors below. Even more intricate and striking are the sunlit designs created by the geometric grilles over the windows at the courtyard end of the gallery. Of course both courtyard and swimming pool are wide open to the sun and air, and most of the house's major lights open on them or in that direction. From other directions, especially when seen by day, the look of the house is closed and defensive. If it lifted itself higher off the ground, there are parts of it that might almost remind one of Fort Zinderneuf, where the Foreign Legion put up such a gallant stand in the old silent movie *Beau Geste*.

But at night, when lit from within, the house appears luminous, radiant, almost buoyant. The grillage in the windows turns to golden filigree work; flickering patterns of light and shade create the impression that the house is breathing. This quality of changing with the amount of light and the time of day is part of what one means by the house and environment performing a kind of sustained and intimate dance.

Antoine Predock has a particula fondness for deserts and an individu fantasy that allows him to suppose tha under the sands of Arizona there ma well be buried ancient Roman villas o temples. When he looks across th saguaro-dotted landscape, his mind see not only the long-extinct Hohokam In dian tribes but also mysterious came caravans laden with Oriental riches A recent year of study in Rome helpe him toward a vision, not unlike that o Piranesi, in which the works of mar wage dubious battle with nature's in exorable energies. There have been pe riods in the history of building wher this vision led to the creation of prefab ricated ruins. But this isn't Predock' way at all. He is a man of nuances an intimations; beyond its stones, mortar and lumber the Fuller house is a struc ture of hints and indirections. It nei ther tries to dominate nor submits t domination; and this is surprisingly ap propriate to an environment where life itself exists, as it were, only on suffer ance. Like Nineveh, Babylon, and the holy city of Heliopolis, Phoenix will someday disappear under the blowing sand. One need not relish that pros pect or even dwell on it to find that a latent awareness of it gives a special dry zest to existence. □

Produced by Elizabeth Sverbeyeff Byron

SETTING FOR A SALON

(Continued from page 128) catalogues, for they have not appeared on the art market in over 150 years and, apart from a brief period on loan to a certain embassy, have not been on public exhibition in living memory.

In the normal way the scale of a room gives a hint as to its nationality, but in this case appearances are deceptive, for this space has been created out of other rooms. The person who dreamed up this space—a free spirit if ever there was one—did not like the idea of a predictable layout and so decided that, instead of a separate drawing room, dining room, and library, it would be better to combine the three rooms into one large all-purpose area, by some sixty feet in extent. ever, the separate functions of are indicated by a cunning arrangement of screens and bookcases extending from the wall—room dividers. At one end is a dining area that is for all intents and purposes a dining room, quite a grand one at that, and when after dinner you move to the salon, you have the illusion of being in a very spacious salon indeed.



The master bedroom in tones of blue

To this extent the room is ideally suited to large functions, except that no such entertaining is ever done here. Instead there are frequent dinners of six or eight—very occasionally more—which work to perfection in this setting. The space is admirably adjusted to the festive *dix-huitième* atmosphere that has made this room the scene of some of the most diverting evenings of my life, diverting because the guests are always such a gifted group—well informed and sharp-witted rather than sharp-tongued. If the host were not someone who is seldom anywhere for very long, this sublime room would constitute a great salon, and there would be no further possibility of keeping it a secret. □

Produced by Jacqueline Gonnet

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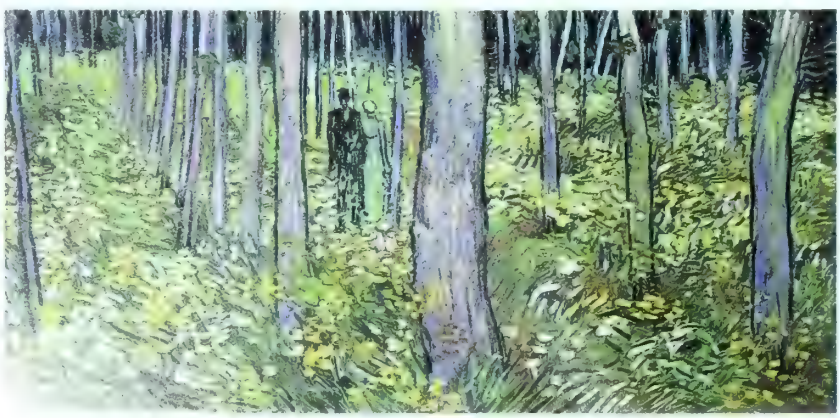
Left: Trees in the Asylum Garden, October 1889. *Center: Self-Portrait,* August 1889. *Bottom: Undergrowth with Two Figures,* June 1890.

VINCENT'S DENOUEMENT IN AUVERS

Vincent van Gogh's transformations of paint into icons of light star once again at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, through March 22, 1987. "Van Gogh in Saint-Rémy and Auvers" exhibits seventy paintings and eighteen drawings done in the last fourteen months (May 1889 to July 1890) of the artist's brief life. Painting in the periods between the deep disturbances of his recurrent epileptic disorder, Van Gogh ferociously pushed his liquid mosaic of strokes into more sinuous swirls and whirlpools. The more patterned strokes and muted colors were partially in response to the gnarled olive trees,



crinkly cypresses, and craggy ravines of the Alpine foothills near the asylum to which he had committed himself. Occasionally, as in the crackling lunar electricity of *Starry Night* (1889), the composition was totally invented. The less agitated radiance of the flower still lifes made at the end of his stay in Saint-Rémy pervaded many of the paintings of wheatfields and chestnut trees done at Auvers, outside Paris, where after a three-month stay Van Gogh took his life. *Klaus Kertess*



THE BOTTA LINE



House in Morbio Superior, Switzerland, 1982.

Only a year and a half after the Museum of Modern Art mounted a show devoted to the classical carryings-on of Leon Krier and Ricardo Bofill, it has veered back to the future. The exhibition of Mario Botta's architecture, on view in New York until February 10, serves up *modernismo con brio.* Botta is the 43-year-old Swiss-born architect whose small houses in the Ticino, based on primary forms, simple materials, and unadorned surfaces, cast him early in his career as the staunch purveyor of Modernist purity. Yet, as curator Stuart Wrede points out, Botta's attention to context and stable composition, as well as his emphasis on the axis, shows that his Modernism is wedded to principles of earlier traditions, albeit with moments of discord. *Suzanne Stephens*



La Casa Rotonda, Stabio, Switzerland, 1980

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Brooke Alexander	59 Wooster Street	925-4338	**Sylvia Plimack Mangold: Drawings John Ahearn: New Sculpture Nov. 1–Dec. 3 Benefit Exhibition for The Kitchen Dec. 12–20**
Damon Brandt Gallery	568 Broadway	431-1444	**Jonathan Genkin: Recent Paintings Oct. 15–Nov. 13 Ellen Driscoll: Recent Sculpture Nov. 18–Dec. 20**
Diane Brown Gallery	100 Greene Street	219-1060	**"RISD/New York": Wade Saunders, Roni Horn, Alan Wexler, Yvonne Jaquette, and others Dec. 18–Jan. 3**
Gabrielle Bryers Gallery	111 Greene Street	925-8058	**Rammellzee Nov. 29–Jan. 3**
Leo Castelli	420 West Broadway	431-5160	**Robert Raushenberg Nov. 1–22 Claes Oldenburg & Coosje Van Bruggen Dec. 13–Jan. 17**
Condeso/Lawler Gallery	76 Greene Street	219-1283	**Czashka Ross: Paper and Bronzes Nov. 25–Dec. 20 Elizabeth Harms: Paintings through Nov. 22**
Charles Cowles Gallery	420 West Broadway	925-3500	**Howard Ben Tré Nov. 1–29 Patrick Ireland: Drawings Gerald Immonen: Paintings Dec.**
Crown Point Press	568 Broadway	226-5476	**Alex Katz Prints Nov. 15–Dec. 20**
Ronald Feldman Fine Arts	31 Mercer Street	226-3232	**Joseph Beuys Oct. 25–Nov. 29 Eleanor Antin: "Loves of a Ballerina" Dec. 6–Jan. 3**
49th Parallel Centre for Contemporary Canadian Art	420 West Broadway	925-8349	**Exhibiting artists such as: Michael Snow, Betty Goodwin, Jeff Wall among other fine Canadian artists**
Gallery Henoch	80 Wooster Street	966-6360	**"Mixed Media": Group Sculpture Exhibition Nov. 1–30 Anthony Southcombe Retrospective: 1976–1986 Dec. 2–31**
Barbara Gladstone Gallery	99 Greene Street	431-3334	**Gerhard Richter: Works of the 60's and 70's Dec.**
Germans van Eck Gallery	420 West Broadway	219-0717	**Bård Breivik: Sculpture Nov. 8–Dec. 6**
John Gibson Gallery	568 Broadway	925-1192	**Joseph Beuys: Posters of his Exhibitions Oct. 8–Nov. 12 Bertrand Lavier Nov. 15–Dec. 20**
Richard Green Gallery	152 Wooster Street	982-3993	**Mark Katano: Paintings and Works on Paper Philippe Judlin: Assemblage Paintings Nov. 15–Dec. 13**
Nancy Hoffman Gallery	429 West Broadway	966-6676	**Don Eddy: Recent Paintings Nov. 15–Dec. 17 Works on Paper Dec. 20–Jan. 14**
Phyllis Kind Gallery	136 Greene Street	925-1200	**Doug Anderson: New Paintings Nov. 15–Dec. 6 Mark Greenwold: Paintings and Drawings Dec. 13–Jan. 7**
Curt Marcus Gallery	578 Broadway	226-3200	**Mark Innerst: Paintings and Works on Paper Nov. Marina Abramovic and Ulay: Large Polaroids and Video Dec.**
Alexander F. Milliken Inc.	98 Prince Street	966-7800	**Lois Polansky: Art of Handmade Paper Nov. 8–Dec. 3 Mary Ann Currier: Oil Pastels Dec. 6–Jan. 7**
Semaphore	137 Greene Street	228-7990	**Duncan Hannah Nov. 1–29 Dan Witz Dec. 3–Jan. 3**
Edward Thorp Gallery	103 Prince Street	431-6880	**Deborah Butterfield: Recent Sculpture Opening Dec. 6**
Barbara Toll Fine Arts	146 Greene Street	431-1788	**Ellen Phelan: New Paintings Nov. 6–29 Drawings by: Bueys, LeWitt, Shapiro, Wiley and others Dec. 6–Jan. 12**
Twining Gallery	568 Broadway	431-1830	**Dorothy Dehner, Grace Knowlton: Sculpture Adolf Benca, Peter Kinley: Drawings By Appointment**

TITANIA'S PALACE

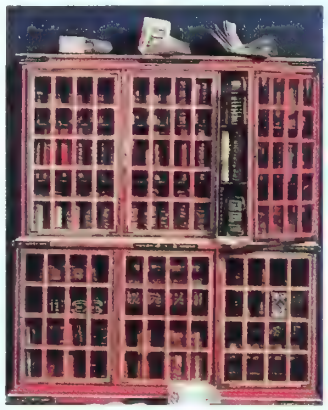
(continued from page 143) India which was used by an Arabian prince to escape from his palace in the middle of one of those thousand and one nights is here; so is Sinbad the Sailor's boat, in silver, and a clock inlaid with mother-of-pearl which the Hickory-Dickory Mouse ran up and down.

It all began on a sunny summer day in Ireland in 1907 at Sir Nevile Wilkinson's home, Mount Merrion. Sir Nevile, a former soldier, Ulster king of arms, and an artist, was sitting outdoors in the woods sketching the trunk of an old sycamore tree. His three-year-old daughter, Guendolen, was playing beside him in the soft moss under the tree when suddenly she cried out that she had seen the Fairy Queen herself disappear into the ground. Sir Nevile of course knew that the fairies dwell underground and usually appear only in the moonlight, and he got the idea of designing a residence aboveground that would befit Her Iridescence Titania—named for the fairy queen in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*—and could be enjoyed by Guendolen and other children.

Sir Nevile appointed himself "architect-in-chief to Her Iridescence" and proceeded to make drawings for a miniature palace that would be 12½ feet long and more than 9 feet wide. The highest point is the belfry, which is 7½ feet high. This was designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens, who was the architect for the miniature palace presented as a gift to Queen Mary in 1924.

Queen Mary's dolls' house is a model residence for a royal family and was created by an architect and a team of artisans, whereas Sir Nevile conceived and designed Titania's Palace himself, painted the walls, ceilings, and many of the objects and created, commissioned, or collected the furnishings. Many of these were in his miniature collection already and others were gathered from all over the world. The Irish craftsmen James Hicks and Thomas Lennon, of Dublin, assisted in the construction, and other leading craftsmen were involved in specialties such as fine miniature furniture and stained-glass windows.

Titania's Palace is made of antique mahogany with oak pillars. There are seventeen rooms enclosing a garden. The four state rooms are two stories high, and the thirteen private rooms



Bookcase holds 91 tiny but readable books.

one story each—halls are not counted. The belfry bells ring every half hour, playing such tunes as "Rule Britannia," "Auld Lang Syne," "God Save the King," and, surprisingly, "Swanee River."

In the process of decorating the walls, floors, and ceilings Sir Nevile developed a technique of miniature-point painting in which tiny dots look like mosaic work. On the ceiling of Titania's tiny bathroom alone, which took eight months to complete, there are no fewer than 250,000 dots. The dolls' house itself took fifteen years to complete, and by that time Guendolen was a young lady. Sir Nevile still did not consider it complete, and by the time of his death in 1942 there were three thousand objects in the palace.

The elaborate furnishings are everything a royal family might need and more, with some additional objects required only by fairies, such as bedroom cupboards for the storage of spare sets of wings and crystal decanters filled with nectar, the drink of the gods, made from a distilled essence of the sweetest briar roses. In hot weather these sophisticated fairies sip their nectar from a tall crystal glass filled to the brim with ice. There is a stand with a drop of rock crystal that symbolizes the first tear of a newborn babe. A fairy can look into this crystal and determine whether the tear is a normal child's tear or that of a child in distress. Sir Nevile was concerned with the plight of crippled children and other young people in distress, so he took Titania's Palace on tour to raise money to help them. It was brought to America in 1926 and was shown around the country and was again exhibited here in 1939 at the World's Fair in New York. In fact it is still raising money for children's charities in its now-permanent installation in the museum at Legoland Park, just outside Billund, Denmark.

The most spectacular object of all in the palace is the Fairy Queen's ebony-and-ivory throne. The back of the throne is adorned with a peacock perched on a pearl. Its unfurled tail is encrusted with diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and sapphires. The peacock is Prince Oberon's symbol. Queen Titania's is a butterfly. Originally this spectacular peacock was a brooch, made by the court jeweler to Emperor Napoleon III for the Paris Exposition of 1855 and presented to Empress Eugénie. Other rare treasures include a tiny gold Hindu god from India, enclosed in a silver-framed glass case supported by ivory elephants. The oldest and finest handwritten book is a 1450 French illuminated manuscript, a Book of Hours bound in vellum. A life story of Galileo, an Italian book, is thought to be the smallest book ever printed. A tiny bookcase with 54 glass doors is filled with 91 tiny books, which can be read with a magnifying glass. It took Sir Nevile thirty years to collect them.

A pair of seventeenth-century equestrian statues are thought to have been made for the Bourbon prince Louis II. The Bristol crystal and Venetian glassware for the table are antiques. Chippendale chairs by Pierre Metge with petit-point seats were so highly prized by Sir Nevile that he hung a memorial plaque to their maker in the Hall of the Guilds. A miniature equestrian sculpture, a replica of the ancient Roman statue of Marcus Aurelius, is in the center of the garden, and a miniature bronze version of Perseus holding the head of Medusa by Benvenuto Cellini stands on the balustrade in the Hall of the Fairy Kiss. A Queen Anne bureau made of walnut with inlays and brass fittings and key is perfect to the smallest detail. It has tiny drawers dovetailed together and a secret compartment in the middle. The smallest object is a gold ring no larger than this O, and there is an ivory elephant the size of an infant's tooth.

Miniature blue-and-white Chinese porcelain was imported from the Orient. (The usual dolls'-house product, even in the finest eighteenth-century Dutch cabinets, is painted milk glass.) And to combine reality with fantasy, a

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TITANIA'S PALACE

miniature cannon, made as a traveler's sample by Michael Mann of Nuremberg in the late sixteenth century, could be used for "spotted snakes with double tongue" or "thorny hedgehogs" if they tried to come near the Fairy Queen. Prince Oberon has such practical objects in his study as a collection of pipes that can be smoked and a folding jackknife, and Titania has watercolor paints and brushes, in case she feels creative, and tiny field glasses to look out the window at birds. The Fairy family loves music: there is a model organ in the chapel that can be played by blowing through the bellows and pressing the keys with matchsticks, and in Titania's boudoir a grand piano that can also be played with matchsticks. In fact Sir Nevile amused thousands of people by playing simple tunes on this piano for a radio broadcast. There is also a fine cello for Oberon to play and a tiny gold trumpet.

Each object is a work of art in itself, and the palace with its fantastic painted walls and ceilings is perfection in miniature. Entering it is like entering a dream world. We can imagine ourselves being received by the Fairy Queen in the Hall of the Guilds, where mischievous little fairies might try to fly through and tease the guests but are hampered by wrought-silver grillwork on the arched openings (only silver and gold grillwork can keep fairies out).

However, no one is allowed into the Hall of the Fairy Kiss except those who are members of the Most Industrious Order of the Fairy Kiss. This order, the highest in Fairyland, is bestowed only on those who can live up to Titania's motto, which is displayed on silk banners designed by Sir Nevile: NIHIL SINE LABORE (Nothing Without Work). Queen Titania conferred Sir Nevile Knight of the Grand Cross of her order as a reward for building her palace. And she presented him with a gold-and-enamel collar with diamond star, which is exhibited in a crystal casket topped by a crown. It is displayed on top of a Louis XV table in the center of the Hall of the Fairy Kiss.

Although few of us can expect to have the honor of receiving Titania's Order of the Fairy Kiss, perhaps after looking in on her palace we will be willing to believe Edmund Spenser when he writes in his *Faerie Queene:*

> Here also playing on a grassy green,
> Wood gods and Satyrs and swift dryads
> With many Fairies oft were dancing seen.

And as Peter Pan suggests, If you believe, clap your hands. □

Titania's Palace is in the museum in Legoland Park in Billund, Denmark, thirty minutes from Copenhagen by air on SAS (the museum is attached to the Hotel Vis-à-Vis) or five hours by car from Copenhagen. The park and museum are open from May 1 through September 15, from 9 A.M. to 8 P.M.

ROMANTIC MINIMALISM

(Continued from page 177) other words, walls came down and balconies and interior windows replaced them. Formal axes were laid out and views carefully aligned ("Stand right here—now look right there," Mindel instructs). Beams—which do no structural work—were added discerningly by the architects to correct the room's proportions. "The only thing that's where it used to be is the fireplace," says Mindel. "Now every part of the apartment has a connection to the grand space. It's seamless."

The apartment might have turned out to be just another case of Postmodern dabbling. "But this building isn't Postmodern, it's really *old,*" says Mindel, explaining the architects' decision to stay true to the building's 1920s classicism. Hence the detailing: the living-room walls are in the style of the period—"They had to be worked out within a half inch of our lives," says Mindel—and swing open to reveal floor-to-ceiling storage. And there is a [illegible]er ceiling (which, just for the [illegible]gestures" to the former di[illegible]f the living room) in the [illegible]ett Adam, as it might have been interpreted in the 1920s.

When Shelton and Mindel get around to the decorative details of the apartment, they tend to say things that architects aren't supposed to enjoy saying, at least not this much. "That fabric"—Mindel rolls his eyes—"I had to wash it ten times and use the wrong side to get it to look right." The hearth—a magnificent piece of Verona marble that looked too precious on its polished side—was also laid "wrong" side up, then sanded and force-fed two quarts of oil until it had acquired some mystery. As for the floors, they had to be sanded, bleached, oiled, polyurethaned, and waxed to achieve their "natural" luster.

The usual architect-approved furniture—Corbusier, Mies, Breuer, maybe a stiff-backed little Hoffmann number—has no place in this particular machine for living. Instead there are down-filled sofas, throw pillows covered in Fortuny fabrics, and furniture from what seems to be the new pantheon for many architects: Louis XVI, Sheraton, Regency, their Italian counterparts, and other things Neoclassical. Mindel says collections and accessories with the same flavor also help "to work the room": black basalt urns and teapots in romantic silhouette; Victorian bookends in the shape of colonnades; a Fornasetti folding screen (another "gesture," this time to a neo-Renaissance building framed in the window). "When I was in architecture school," says Mindel, "if you collected this sort of thing, you kept quiet about it."

Sitting in the apartment, you say to yourself, This is architecture—and decoration—at its purest. The room is filled with presence—and not that of the architects' egos. Instead you can concentrate on the changing light, on the way it plays with a palette that runs from cream to yellow to gold, on the way it molds the splendidly proportioned rooms. And you can do all this with your feet on a tapestry footstool and your head on a damask pillow. But how do two young architects, both products of Modernist dogma and Postmodern "wit," rationalize having so much fun playing decorator? Says Shelton: "You don't feel really silly unless the only explanation for what you've done is, Well, why not?" □

Produced by Heather Smith MacIsaac



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CONNOISSEURSHIP ON RITTENHOUSE SQUARE

(Continued from page 115) latest novels, biographies, monographs, magazines; above all, a house where that old-fashioned quality, life enhancement, was the order of the day.

Inevitably the conversation would turn to the collection. Henry would relate how, as a student at the Fogg Art Museum, he had the good fortune to study under Paul Sachs, man, like himself, of wealth as well as culture. After graduating from Harvard—magna cum laude in 1933—the newly fledged art historian joined the newly fledged Philadelphia Museum as curator of decorative arts; at the same time he set about forming a collection that would chart the development of French painting from Neoclassicism to Post Impressionism. Muffled up in overcoats and scarves and furs rugs and accompanied by a formidable mother who cosseted him, Henry would do the rounds of dealers in New York Paris, and London. And very welcome the McIlhennys were. The Depression had knocked most American collectors out of the market, so there was little competition for someone who had enough money to back up a fastidious eye.

By the time World War II came along—and incidentally made a new man of Henry by transforming him into a naval commander—every major master of his chosen period (with the exception of Monet, Pissarro, and Gauguin) was represented, not just at his best but by a work of major historical significance. For instance, the monumental study after David's *Coronation of Napoleon* is arguably the most important painting in America by this important artist. The same is true of Toulouse-Lautrec's quintessential *La Danse au Moulin Rouge,* which Henry bought for $40,000 in the mid thirties (probably worth about $10 million today), and of Degas's haunting *Interior,* more familiarly, if misleadingly, known as *The Rape.* Ingres's painting of the sublimely ugly comtesse de Tournon—how at home she looked presiding over all the Charles X furniture—is as incisive as any of this artist's portraits. As for Van Gogh's rainswept field at Saint-Rémy: what more poetic metaphor for angst? And who will ever forget the confrontation of Renoir's exquisite painting of a reserved little girl, *Mlle. Legrand,* with Degas's celebrated bronze of a teenage ballerina (the one with the real gauze tutu)? "Would you believe she came with a change of skirts?" Henry used to say. "I've got another in reserve."

Henry's forays into twentieth-century art were few, but they were as sagacious as his nineteenth-century acquisitions. The marvelous Matisse *Still Life on Table* (reproduced on pages 118–19) is a case in point—seemingly so casually composed but in fact as taut and tightly knit as the masterly Cézanne *White Sugar Bowl,* which Henry sold the year before he died. "Why hang onto it?" he said. "There are more Cézannes in Philadelphia than there are in Paris!" Given the riches of the Barnes Collection and the museum, he was probably right.

Like the wood fires that were kept going as late as possible into spring, Henry's warmth and wit lit up his house and gave it a gala air. How tireless he was in his efforts to amuse his guests. There would be visits to the Philadelphia Museum with which the McIlhenny family was closely identified; to the Barnes Collection, from which Henry, by virtue of his museum affiliation, had for long been banned; to the du Pont gardens at Longwood to enjoy the topiary; to the Rosenbach Museum and Library to admire, among much else, such relics of the beautiful Mrs. Lydig as her "sinful"



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hoe trees (made of Stradivarius vio-ns, according to Henry); to the great ouses of the Main Line, where Bid-les and Scotts and Montgomerys still ved in style.

And then back to the delights of Rit-enhouse Square. If it were lunchtime, veryone would congregate for daiqui-s in the library—an informal room ir-everently hung with portraits of imself, a couple of Rouault Christs, nd Dali's famous drawing of Harpo Marx playing the harp. If it was eve-ing, guests would assemble in the nore formal green-silk drawing room, here the greater part of the collection as displayed and where a magnificent et of Charles X furniture testified to Henry's pioneering taste in *bois clair*. Everything would be discreetly festive. How upset the host was when a tempo-ary chef served up the caviar in a swan arved out of ice. "So pretentious," he aid and, after taking a look at the black plodge in the swan's gut, "so unappe-izing!"

Henry lived in even greater state at Glenveagh, his romantic nineteenth-entury castle in County Donegal. This roperty, which he had acquired in the hirties, was only a few miles from the birthplace of the grandfather who ounded the McIlhenny fortune by nventing the gas meter—not, as was often said, Tabasco. For Henry it sym-olized ancestral turf. From Belfast it was a long, dullish drive (a good three hours to the castle), also a potentially dangerous one in that it passed through Northern Ireland's principal battle zone. But around Glenveagh all was peace and quiet—fuchsia hedges and thatched cottages, too often paint-ed those terrible Day-Glo colors the Irish love. Visitors who assumed the lodge gates spelled the end of their journey were in for a surprise—the road continued for miles, climbing over bleak, boggy moors scarred with the black pits of peat diggers. More of-ten than not the wind would be howl-ing and gray-black rain clouds banging into each other immediately overhead. Far as the eye could see, the land, as the driver would proudly announce, be-longed to Henry; and that flash of quicksilver way below was Loch Veagh, of legendary depth. As the road wound down and down, clumps of ponticum rhododendron provided welcome relief from the heather and



A view of Glenveagh, McIlhenny's romantic castle in County Donegal.

gorse. It was like arriving at an oasis. Round one last bend and the castle's great tower would appear silhouetted against the heliotrope slopes of the deer forest and peat-brown waters of the lake. Banks of blue hydrangeas lined the last stretch of drive, while stone stags crowned with real antlers guarded gateways. On the left there would be a glimpse of a Gothick green-house filled with lilies. Through one last set of gates into a courtyard and you were finally there.

Henry had put the juvenile footmen who dashed out to deal with the lug-gage into loden—"The perfect solu-tion for Irish weather," he said, so guests could hardly be blamed for fan-cying themselves in Austria. Not for long. The pervasive smell of peat smoke—peat fires were kept going in virtually every room—confirmed that this was Donegal, not the Salzkammer-gut. Tea—the best tea in the world: sil-ver dishes piled with homemade scones and Irish bread and iced cakes—would be waiting in the dining room. So would Henry, surrounded by Landseers and golden retrievers and a smattering of Guinnesses, without whom no Irish house party is com-plete. "Well, *hello,* there!" Henry's joyous Main Line yodel would disarm the shyest arrival. "Meet Stephen Spender, John Huston, Brooke Astor, the McGillicuddy of the Reeks, and tuck into Nellie's brandy snaps."

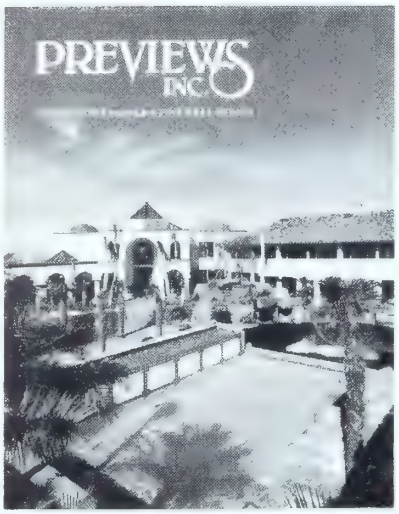
For all that he owned the finest deer forest in Ireland, Henry seldom, if ever, stalked. He left that to his guests, but most of these preferred buying tweed or visiting country houses to hunting stags. Not I. A week's stalking every September took the place of a cure; at least until I acquired a dog with the same markings as the deer and nev-er again pulled a trigger. In their caps and knickerbockers of local tweed, which Henry had specially woven for his estate workers, the stalkers looked like old-time golfers, but they turned out to have aboriginal cunning and skills. Out of season they worked hard at keeping twenty (or was it thirty?) miles of fences in repair, also at fash-ioning antlers into chandeliers and the like for guest rooms and picnic huts. In the season they worked no less hard at putting flabby guests like myself through the equivalent of a commando course.

One of the joys of stalking was the view from the moors: the very roof of Ireland. "Yonder is Tory Island," the head gillie would point toward a dis-tant shaft of sunlight striking the At-lantic breakers. "The next parish is Boston." All of a sudden the world seemed very small.

Meanwhile back in the castle Henry would be hard at work keeping his less sporting guests—often a dozen or more—diverted: there would be visits to Lord Mountbatten's bleak fastness at Classiebawn; to the painter Derek Hill's snug cottage filled with Victori-ana; to a neighboring beach where a morning's crabbing would be followed by a picnic served by a butler and foot-man ("So much less *trouble*!"); to the weavers who made báinin, the nubbly creamy tweed Henry used for much of his upholstery; or to a ceili, a wild country dance that would last all night.

Food was a constant preoccupation of Henry's, and he spent hours spur-ring Nellie, the cook, on to ever greater efforts—*cuisine ancienne* rather than *nouvelle*—which made cures at Mon-tecatini obligatory. When he wasn't supervising the meals, Henry was supervising the garden. For he was one of the most imaginative gardeners of his day; also one of the most fortunate. His "pleasure gardens" had the benefit of not only a frost-free miniclimate (courtesy of the nearby Gulf Stream) but also a range of hills and woods which ensured total protection from wind. And since he could afford twelve or more in help, Henry was in a posi-tion to grow pretty much what he wanted: New Zealand tree ferns, all kinds of Andean rarities, lilies, ericas, and azaleas galore, above all the tender rhododendrons for which Glenveagh was famed. He was also an ingenious landscape designer. The magical moss garden was like a set for *Swan Lake,*

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and the gargantuan flight of Aztec stairs he built up an entire hillside resembled Chichén Itzá in its dramatic steepness, except that pots of azaleas adorned the steps.

Besides a green thumb, Henry had a deft touch at "doing the flowers," baskets of which would be brought in from his abundant cutting garden. So that he could indulge this favorite hobby, Glenveagh was equipped with a large and handsome flower room lined with deal counters and paneled closets—how Henry loved the scrubbed Austrian look—which opened up to reveal hundreds of containers for flowers. Here the host would spend hours filling as many as thirty or forty vases in the course of a morning. He prided himself on the easy, natural look of his handiwork. "Arranged flowers," he told *Town & Country* in 1974, "are for funeral parlors."

The cost of maintaining this Xanadu—it involved an indoor and outdoor staff of about forty people—eventually exceeded even Henry's considerable means, and about ten years ago he began the gradual process of ceding Glenveagh—partly by gift, partly by sale—to the Irish government as a nature preserve. He finally moved out in 1983 but continued to spend several months a year in Europe. After his annual cure at Montecatini, he would fly his butler and American chef across the Atlantic and rent either Countess Walderdorff's house, Hochegg, for the Salzburg festival or Count Volpi's Venetian hideaway, Ca' Leone, with its secret garden, on the Giudecca. And in the winter he would escape to a beach house in Key West or Hawaii to avoid the cold.

Last summer Henry planned to return to Venice, but death intervened first his sister, Bernice; then, less than two weeks later, Henry himself. The flags of Philadelphia flew at half-mast and, on one public building in particular, could only be persuaded to return to normal with considerable difficulty. In due course, the Philadelphia Museum—heir to most of Henry's art—will put the collection on view and thus provide its creator with the best of monuments. Meanwhile, Henry lives on in the memories of those who knew him as more than a great host, more than a great collector: a friend who had the distinction, rare in the very rich, of a heart that eclipsed his fortune. □

BARCELONA REBORN

(Continued from page 152) part they are done for commemorative rather than artistic reasons. The Barcelona Pavilion is an example of the latter impulse, but we must regard this admirable effort as something other than the real thing; it is in fact a museum of itself. Since the announcement in 1983 that the project was commencing in time for completion by the approaching Mies centenary, its credibility was understood to depend largely on the accuracy of the new plans and the quality of execution. Those conditions might seem self-evident in the success of any architectural design, but they attain crucial importance with Mies. In his reductive aesthetic, precision is everything, for the simple reason that minimalism encourages scrutiny. Surfaces must be smoother, joints must be cleaner, and materials must be better than those that could suffice in the visually busier context of pre-Modern architecture. The degree to which the cost-cutting copyists of Mies strayed from that truth was a major factor in the debasement of the International Style and the resulting Postmodernist revolt against it.

That imperative to excellence was fully appreciated by the three Barcelona architects—Cristian Cirici, Fernando Ramos, and Ignasi de Solá-Morales—who executed the new pavilion to Mies's original design as closely as they were able to determine it. No complete plans have survived, but using photos, sketches, contemporary journalistic descriptions, and a recently rediscovered paving diagram, a number of Mies experts helped piece together an almost definitive picture of how it looked in 1929.

The trio of Spanish architects began by making the most important right

ecision: to rebuild the pavilion in the precise position of the original. Remarkably, the setting has changed very little in six decades. To the south of the gently sloping plot on Montjuïc (Jewish Mountain) still stands the exposition's Alfonso XIII Palace, one of a pair of historicizing masonry exhibition halls built by the fair's official architect, Josep Puig i Cadafalch. The palace, with its traditional Spanish *miador* towering over the sleek low-lung Mies pavilion, is an important survivor, for it explains the conservative norm that Mies was rebelling against and shows how well his design responds to its setting. Because of the Barcelona Pavilion's highly abstract nature, many have assumed that it could have been built anywhere. Seeing it in situ reveals just how contextual it actually is. (The only intrusion is a Brutalist low-rise office building directly facing the front of the pavilion; plans for its removal are happily under way.)

At first the German Pavilion was to have stood at a focal point of the exposition, but Mies's faultless instinct for site planning prompted him to ask for another. Mies's art is primarily one of contrast: man-made against natural, glass against masonry or metal, old against new. But he knew when a challenge to the status quo would not work, and he felt the highly visible position initially offered him at the Barcelona fair would be too much to compete with. By requesting a less obtrusive place along the broad, high flank of the Alfonso XIII Palace, Mies secured a more hospitable environment.

The new site stood at a natural traffic node between the center of the fairgrounds and the hugely popular Spanish Village on the hillside above it, and the architecture of the pavilion was intended to promote the flow of visitors. Immediately Mies envisioned a fluid arrangement of open spaces that would invite and propel movement through them. His first sketches for the Barcelona Pavilion indicate that the general format of loosely deployed solid and transparent wall planes was in effect from the start. But then came a critical departure. As Mies later recounted it, "One evening as I was working late on the building I made a sketch of a free-standing wall, and I got a shock. I knew it was a new principle."

That principle was the separation of the traditional dual role of the wall as both support and screen. Mies decided for the first time to use a system of thin steel columns spaced evenly on a grid throughout the interior for structural support. These columns not only permitted free placement of interior partitions but also allowed exterior walls, released from the load-bearing function of traditional masonry, to be as open as Mies wished. A new age of nearly transparent architecture was at hand, and the Barcelona Pavilion was one of the most sophisticated demonstrations of that freedom.

Mies worked on a small model with a Plasticine floor and miniature wall panels (covered with colored Japanese papers to simulate patterned marbles) that he slid back and forth until he captured the spatial effects he was after. This evolved into the first of Mies's Platonic "universal spaces" in which he sought to eradicate all sense of containment. That was to become the great creative quest (and compositional dead end) of his later career, but here the idea had all the vigor and intensity of so many initial statements of revolutionary concepts.

Mies flaunted the nonstructural nature of his walls in two ways: by cladding them in thin, obviously decorative marble veneers and by expressing the pavilion's eight steel columns as objectively as possible. Shaped in cross section like a plus sign, they were chrome-plated to a gleaming jeweler's finish. The columns stood just inches in front of walls to advertise the fact that those tensile members, not the vertical planes of marble and glass behind them, were holding up the deeply overhanging roof.

Though not a very large structure—the roof is slightly under 5,000 square feet, with a total ground area of twice that size—the pavilion was absolutely unlike any building its viewers had seen in 1929. So inured have we become today to the Miesian mode in its later institutional phase that it takes a considerable act of will to imagine what a shock this audacious departure



pavilion's early visitors. No doubt many of the unsuspecting public who happened upon the pavilion found it too close to Mies's avowed goal of an architecture that was *beinahe nichts* ("almost nothing"), but others recognized it as a profound, even deeply spiritual, declaration of what the style of our time should be.

In the strictest sense the German Pavilion was a functionless building, with the architecture serving as the exhibit itself. (Displays of German trade goods were housed elsewhere on the fairgrounds in settings designed by Mies and his colleague and inamorata, Lilly Reich, who was also responsible for the interior design of the pavilion.) A formal showpiece with no practical purpose other than to shelter the Golden Book that the king and queen of Spain signed to inaugurate it, the pavilion was also a manifest symbol of the new architecture that had flourished in Germany for the preceding decade and, by extension, the new democratic Germany itself. That official intention



Structural columns of steel stand inches in front of nonstructural marble walls.

was made quite clear in the opening remarks of Georg von Schnitzler, commissioner-general of the German Pavilion, who proudly declared, "We wished to show here what we can do, what we are, how we feel and see. We do not want anything but clarity, simplicity, honesty."

The German government's desire for progressive image making led logically to Mies as architect for their world's fair presentation. In 1927, under Mies's leadership, the Deutsche Werkbund scored the most resounding triumph of the Modern movement with its sponsorship of the Weissenhofsiedlung housing estate in Stuttgart, a bold demonstration of Modern architecture implemented with careful attention to social aims. The Barcelona Pavilion was little more than a luxurious vitrine in comparison with that earlier ambitious attempt at social engineering, but it shared an aura of enlightened intentions conveying all the power of a new faith.

It is true that the Barcelona Pavilion is supremely photogenic: the wide-angle lens confers on it a dynamic horizontal sweep not fully borne out when one is there in person. But the sixty-year-old black-and-white photos have concealed much more than they have implied. The pavilion's colors come as a surprise even at a distance. Can that really be a red curtain behind the gray green glass of the main façade? It is, conforming to contemporary descriptions of that velvet hanging, although one questions the choice of such a bright shade instead of the deeper wine red that was characteristic of twenties interior design.

One ascends the surrounding four-foot-high travertine podium via a short flight of steps parallel to the long front elevation of the pavilion. Atop the podium, one is drawn first to the shimmering oblong sheet of water at one's feet. This reflecting pool is bounded by a chaste travertine wall so simple and horizontal in line that it draws one's eye past the small office annex in the corner of that courtyard, along the free-standing travertine wall and bench that connect the annex visually with the pavilion proper, and around to the main building's entrance.

A 180-degree turn has thus been effected almost unconsciously, a ploy similar to those used by the designers of the classic stroll gardens of old Japan. Like the Japanese masters, Mies here has dramatized our experience of arrival by stretching out the route to the maximum, using abrupt shifts in direction, carefully directed vistas, and



illfully screened planes to produce a ngle, illusionistic effect: making a relively small space seem infinite.

One moves into the building without even being aware of entering. The oad cantilever of the roof is already verhead before any sense of a portal is pparent. (Mies wanted no doors at all, though he was forced to design some be attached at night for security.) To e left as one enters is the first of three alls of rare stone, this one of Tínos arble from Greece, dark gray with reen, black, and white inclusions. The oors, paved with the same Tivoli travrtine as the podium, are bare, save for e rectangle of solid-black carpet that efines the main seating area in the rincipal interior space. On that rug tand contemporary copies of the eponmous chrome-and-leather Barcelona hairs and stools Mies designed (and ad upholstered in immaculate white id) as modern thrones for King Alfono XIII and Queen Victoria Eugenia. But that arrangement in black and white seems far from somber because f its proximity to the cynosure of the avilion interior: the famous freetanding wall of onyx doré.

Mies's attraction to opulent materials is an integral part of his legend. Years after the exposition he recalled is visit to the Hamburg stoneyard of Köstner & Gottschalk, importers of fine marbles. After examining and rejecting several samples for the focal indoor partition, he mildly taunted, "Come on boys, don't you have something else, something truly beautiful?" Thereupon they produced the fabulous golden onyx from Morocco, of such rarity and expense as to make it the equivalent of building with a semiprecious stone. Mies snapped it up on the spot, paying from his own pocket to secure it.

After the pavilion was taken down, the onyx and other valuable materials were returned to Germany for recycling to defray the high cost of the pavilion (the onyx cost over $26,000, a huge sum at the time and more than one-sixth of the $160,000 total; the reconstruction cost approximately $1 million). Replacing it proved to be the biggest problem in the re-creation. The Moroccan quarry that produced the original stone had become inactive, and the search widened to Brazil, Israel, Mexico, and Pakistan. Slabs of onyx big enough to conform to Mies's large paving module could not be found, and completion of the new pavilion was delayed for the better part of a year. Finally an acceptable—though far from perfect—specimen, less translucent and more purplish, was discovered in Algeria and installed in an approximation of Mies's carefully "book-matched" pattern.

One then moves from the onyx wall into the enclosed northern courtyard of the pavilion, with its smaller reflecting pool and graceful figurative sculpture in one corner. From that vantage point, surrounded by three walls of verd antique marble and screened from the main reception area by a fourth wall of gray green glass panels, one can fully enjoy Mies's intriguing interplay of reflectiveness and opacity, transparency and translucence.

Less happy than the outcome of the onyx wall was the architects' decision to remake the eight columns in stainless steel rather than chrome. It was a change impelled by practicality. Tests predicted that chrome-plated columns would soon corrode in the salt air of the coastal city, a factor that did not arise in the brief life of the original structure. But the soft sheen of the stainless-steel replacements produces a very different impression from that of the hard mirror finish Mies intended. His attentiveness, indeed obsessiveness, when it came to such details has thereby been seriously compromised.

Another glaring error is the handling of the outdoor reflecting pool. The inner surface of the original was matte green—perhaps glass, perhaps painted concrete. Whatever the actual material, it is certain that Mies wanted it to read as an unbroken reflective surface, a void against the lighter travertine surround. Some 1929 photos show a few waterlilies afloat in the pool, and inspired by that evidence, the new architects have planned to cultivate them. To anchor roots in the shallow pool, the bottom has been spread with large flat pebbles, which destroy the solid effect Mies was after. It is a regrettable move, tantamount to replacing



black carpet inside the pavilion with a flowery Aubusson.

One vestige of the pavilion as it first stood seems nothing short of miraculous. Hovering over the building's smaller interior reflecting pool—lined with the correct black glass of the original—is a slightly larger than life-size bronze female figure, *Morning* by Georg Kolbe, well known from the historical photos. It is in fact a cast of the original, which was shipped back to Berlin after the fair closed and, having survived World War II, still stands outside the West Berlin city hall. This replica was presented to the pavilion by the West German government.

Though Mies would take strong exception to several aspects of the new Barcelona Pavilion, some things are even better than he was able to execute. Constrained by budget cuts, which halted construction for several weeks in 1929, Mies was forced to finish the north and west walls of the building in dark green stucco instead



Freestanding travertine wall and bench visually link the pavilion and the office annex. At rear is the Alfonso XIII Palace.

of the verd antique marble he had wanted. In the new version those walls are fully clad, as Mies intended. In the interests of permanence, a concrete roof replaces Mies's wood and tar paper over steel, and paving joints on the podium have been artfully voided to provide the drainage Mies neglected to consider. Although the reconstruction architects might not have regarded Mies an infallible oracle, neither did they try to make him into a ventriloquist's dummy.

In spite of the flaws in this fascinating artifact, we must be grateful to the devoted archaeologists of Modernism who have worked so selflessly to revivify the pivotal design of a much-maligned master. It will now be much harder for succeeding generations to write off Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. And as problematic as his work after the Barcelona Pavilion might be considered by some, there will always be this irrefutable proof that he was not the dour mastermind of a misguided movement, but the passionate creator of a poetic space worthy of standing among the most memorable architectural treasures of all time. □

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(Continued from page 158) with the etwork of existing trees, grassy slopes eiled with fruit trees penetrated the ormal plan with fingers of green, interupting the architectural lines of the erraces.

Mrs. Farrand tacitly avoided some f the conventional features of classical ardens. She did not provide an imposng overview, and the plan is not readiy apparent as a result. Instead of rranging elements with conventional ymmetry, she relied on balanced symmetry to create dynamic groupngs that acknowledged the sloping ite. On the terraces the plants on the phill side tend to be dominant, offseting the expanse of the landscape on he opposite side. A single deodar cedar is weighted against a bank of mixed rees to frame the North Vista. A trianle of massive beech trees anchors teraces outside the Orangery.

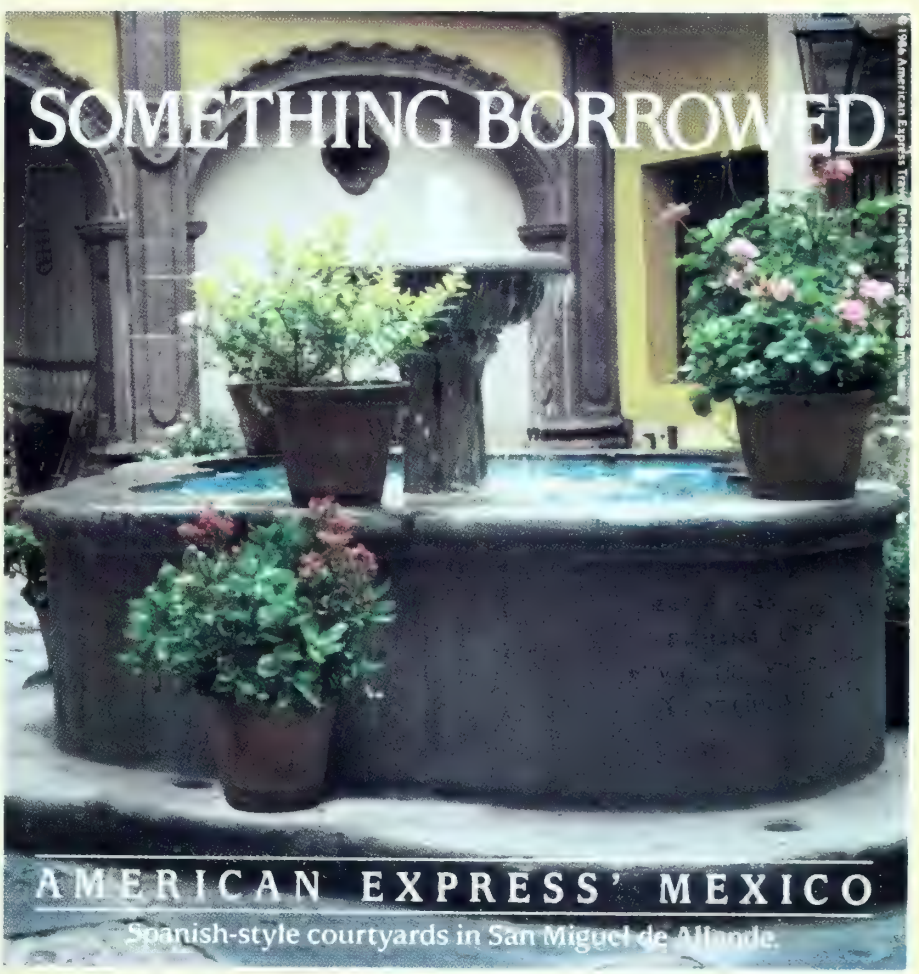
Architectural elements, as a rule, are nore symmetrically arranged; but occasionally their balance is skewed, reflecting the site's irregularity. The paths that serve as axes underline Mrs. Farrand's system of asymmetric balances. Her connections tend to be informal, based on organic rather than on architectural ties. A row of pollarded branches, tendrils of climbing plants growing through openwork walls, or the vertical shoots of an orchard canopy provide just enough mystery to incite curiosity, attracting eyes and feet further into the garden.

Dumbarton Oaks could have been a grand place, imposing as Versailles with its monumental view, but consciously it is not. The scale is strikingly domestic—a quality attributable in part to Mrs. Farrand's tendency to frame the terraces with plants. Her choice is remarkable, given the splendid view. Edith Wharton advocated the division of gardens into serviceable parts, but her niece went a step further, taking considerable trouble to enclose the spaces at Dumbarton Oaks. The Herb Garden, set on one of the lowest terraces, was surrounded by an "aerial hedge" of cropped Kieffer pears, and the walk that cuts downhill between the north and east terraces is so dramatically box-edged that it serves as a mazelike allée rather than a legible central axis. In effect, the view is a foil rather than a feature in Beatrix Farrand's scheme: the sweeping expanse of lawn in front of the house and the suggestion of an open landscape behind it provide breathing room, allowing for the development of a complex sequence of rooms within the garden proper.

Dumbarton Oaks is an intimate garden, extravagant not in its imposing views, not in its dazzling array of plants, but in its wealth of exquisite details. Most notable are the garden ornaments—finials, gateposts, copings, swags, and seats. All were carefully conceived; many were constructed in full-scale study models before their designs were finalized. Lavish curves crisscross the pavings of paths; veins bulge on wrought-iron leaves around a canopied garden seat. Such attention to particulars delighted Mrs. Bliss, for part of her mission at Dumbarton Oaks was to illustrate the wealth of materials and styles appropriate for garden ornament. In Beatrix Farrand she found a capable kindred spirit.

Mrs. Farrand's planting was predominantly evergreen, in response to the Blisses' request for an interesting winter garden. She featured boxwood, holly, and yew—blue green plants that are small in leaf as well as habit and thus proportionately scaled to the architecture and the outdoor rooms. Bold leaves of *Magnolia grandiflora* and occasional flowering trees accented the evergreen palette. Terrace walls were softened by a "controlled tangle" of vines intended to "clothe the walls without covering them completely." According to Mrs. Farrand's explicit instructions, one-third of a wall's surface could be ivy-clad; two or three trailing stems were allowed to soften the stone finials. Throughout the garden the planting is restrained, reflecting Mrs. Farrand's inclination to strive for harmony rather than display. She particularly admired the "quiet" of a composition that was free of extraneous detail, citing the East Lawn and the Ellipse as the garden's most successfully planted areas.

In spring Dumbarton Oaks' characteristic greens are overshadowed by an annual explosion of flowers, with



sheets of daffodils and the sparkling masses of forsythia that Mrs. Farrand used so ingeniously to blanket the slope between the formal section of the garden and Rock Creek. After the bulbs have bloomed, brightly colored flowers are restricted to beds and borders on the lower terraces where Mrs. Farrand used color in broad impressionistic washes. Though planted formally, even the roses are arranged in a spectrum that begins with pale yellow and builds through apricot to a crescendo of bright pink. Despite the care with which she modulated the color, Beatrix Farrand considered the garden's structure to be far more important than its flowers, writing that the "roses in the rose garden are really only secondary to the general design of the garden and its form and mass."

One of Mrs. Farrand's most significant contributions as a landscape designer is her vision of a garden as an ever-changing work of art. Underlying that vision is her grasp of the "direct relationship between proper maintenance and preservation of the design concept," according to Diane McGuire, a landscape architect and former Advisor for the Gardens at Dumbarton Oaks. This understanding was enhanced, no doubt, by Beatrix Farrand's creative partnership with Mrs. Bliss and by her extraordinarily long affiliation with the garden.

In 1940, Mr. and Mrs. Bliss conveyed Dumbarton Oaks to Harvard as a center for scholarship and research. Mrs. Farrand facilitated the garden's transition from private to semipublic with a report that has since been published under the title *Beatrix Farrand's Plant Book for Dumbarton Oaks*. She knew the garden intimately and could prescribe precisely how often and how severely plants needed pruning and which sections of the plan would need periodic renewal. In cases where replacements would prove difficult, she proposed appropriate alternatives. Her plant book is a milestone in landscape gardening: with candid simplicity she outlined the ideas that had shaped Dumbarton Oaks' landscape, and in so doing, she ensured the preservation of the garden she considered the best work in her fifty-year career.

Dumbarton Oaks has changed, quite naturally, since Mrs. Farrand penned her philosophy in the plant book, but it remains a glorious and distinctly personal garden. Although the plan incorporates a wealth of imported elements, Mrs. Farrand's underlying respect for place rather than pattern and her elegant understatement render it an ingeniously American creation.

Today the garden is enriched by Mrs. Bliss's outstanding collection of books and prints on garden history, assembled under the expert counsel of Mrs. Farrand. Both library and garden have served as a source of information and inspiration for innumerable landscape historians and designers. Georgina Masson, Lester Collins, Lanning Roper, Eleanor McPeck, Diana Balmori, Elisabeth MacDougall, and Diane McGuire are but a few who have studied both indoors and out at Dumbarton Oaks. Some have responded with books written about the garden or Mrs. Farrand: working at Mrs. Bliss's request, Walter Muir Whitehill produced a comprehensive study of the place, *Dumbarton Oaks: The History of a Georgetown House and Garden, 1800–1966;* Mrs. Masson wrote *Dumbarton Oaks: A Guide to the Gardens;* a coloquium on the history of landscape architecture resulted in the publication of *Beatrix Jones Farrand: Fifty Years of American Landscape Architecture;* and most recently Balmori, McGuire, and McPeck coauthored the insightful *Beatrix Farrand's American Landscapes: Her Gardens and Campuses*. Others have followed in Mrs. Bliss's footsteps and gleaned ideas for application to their own landscapes. All would undoubtedly give boundless pleasure to the two women who separately dreamed of a center for American garden art and together created one. □

TREASURES OF THE GREEN VAULTS

(Continued from page 106) rooms, green no longer, were adorned with carved and gilded paneling, plate glass with gold, blue, and red grounds, and gilded decorative brackets. There were rows of gilded Rococo tables with marble tops, the columns supporting the vault were covered with pier glasses, and the treasures were carefully displayed in order of importance—gems on the tables, silver on the brackets, ornamental objects on a variety of ledges. All in all, it was a complex, glittering environment, with the sparkle of the jewels and the gleam of the gold and silver endlessly reflected in the profusion of mirrors.

Luckily most of this survived the war; it is now being restored, and the exhibits are scheduled to move back sometime in 1989. Even in its temporary—and less glamorous—quarters, the collection dazzles, and it is sometimes hard to remember that, in this most frivolous of treasure troves, what we are seeing is an early example of capitalism in action.

That the kings of Spain and the Indies should have been covered with gems is not very surprising, that the French royal family, ruling over the most populated and richest country in Europe, should have owned a great many diamonds seems perfectly in order, but Saxony—now part of the German Democratic Republic—was never a great power. Like the American West, however, it had its own riches: silver deposits were discovered late in the twelfth century, and eventually so were tin, iron, and copper.

Already in the sixteenth century the electors of Saxony drew disproportionate power from their riches, while a solid and tax-paying middle class, the first such in Europe, grew up in Dresden. Naturally all those who could bought beautiful objects. It was easy: Dresden early developed a large body of supremely skilled gold- and silversmiths with a clientele spreading as far as Moscow and Paris. But, imposing as the electors' hoard had become by the end of the seventeenth century, it was more than doubled by one of the most picturesque characters ever to sit on a throne.

Augustus the Strong loved jewels and beautiful things of every kind, but

was also quite capable of spending s nights drinking with the Sergeant-ng, Frederick William of Prussia, til both had to be carried out. He s enormously ambitious and suc-eded in getting himself elected king Poland, but women, large, small, d in-between, so fascinated him that fathered well over a hundred illegit-iate children, one of whom, the réchal de Saxe, turned out to be the eatest general of his time. Augustus s tall, wide, and enormously vigor-s, but he did not hesitate to order, d use, the most delicate of jeweled ffee sets. As for his political ups and wns, they read like something in a ltaire novel.

First, he bribed the Poles on such a ale as to ensure his election as their ng in 1697, a great coup since the for-er Electoral Highness now became is Majesty; then he was dethroned by narles XII of Sweden, who set up a ppet king in his place; then he made ace with the Swede and his nominee; en, when Peter the Great crushed harles, he recovered the throne of Po-nd—and all the while, he wenched d he collected.

Augustus also commissioned two of e most attractive buildings in Ger-any, the Zwinger and Pillnitz. Start-g as an orangerie, the Zwinger soon ew to its present size. With its grand ntrance gate, pavilions, and galleries it ecame the most graceful of Rococo ttings for court festivities of all kinds. nd just a few miles up the Elbe, Pill-tz, also designed by Pöppelmann, as good an example of eighteenth-ntury chinoiserie as can be found ywhere. Its two long, low wings, mplete with China-style pillars and agoda roofs, manage to be playful and ately at the same time.

Given Augustus's robust nature, ese might seem like unlikely settings, nd yet this large, loud, red-faced bon vant understood not just architecture ut design of all kinds. He encouraged, en subsidized, the first hard-paste orcelain manufacture in Europe and ave it land in Meissen. He also discov-red the talents of Balthasar Permoser, sculptor who combined Rococo ele-ance with German vigor, and of J. M. Dinglinger, a journeyman goldsmith rom Swabia. Together they produced any of the masterpieces still to be een in the Green Vaults, and they also trained successors, like J. H. Köhler, who carried on their achievements into the next generation.

Of course, Augustus had good, practical reasons for all this. When he became—or was restored as—king of Poland, he felt compelled to spend part of the year in Warsaw, a place he not unjustly considered semibarbaric, and although he could hardly bring his palaces along, porcelain, jewelry, and small—or not-so-small—precious objects traveled nicely.

The star of this last category is probably the most extraordinary achievement of the goldsmith's art in eighteenth-century Europe. Completed in 1708 by Dinglinger, the work is entitled *The Court of Delhi* and supposedly represents the birthday of the Grand Mughal. Measuring over three feet in width, it is a crowned scene of gold, silver, precious stones, and enamel. Against a backdrop of arches, topped by little pagodas, and centering on a great arch complete with canopies and reached by majestic stairs is a crowd of brightly attired visitors, some holding parasols or carrying movable thrones, while camels and elephants enter from the sides. Just below the arch the Grand Mughal sits on the plumpest of red cushions.

The size of this astonishing object, the lushness of its colors and materials, the animation of the scene it depicts, and the perfection of its details—all combine to place it in a category by itself. But it was only one of the many masterpieces commissioned by Augustus. There is also, for instance, the coffee set of gold, porcelain, precious stones, and enamel designed and made by Dinglinger. Topped by a diamond-encrusted coffeepot, this Rococo pyramid, made up of four platforms carrying polychrome porcelain cups and gold vases, is also adorned with ivory figures of the Greek gods and a variety of putti. The cups are mounted in gold and diamonds, glitter is everywhere, and once again the degree of perfection is breathtaking.

This is also true of Dinglinger's *The Bath of Diana,* a gold-mounted onyx



shell—with an ivory Diana lolling under a jeweled and enameled canopy—supported by an enameled stag, as well as *The Hunting Clock,* a lavishly bejeweled object with the miracle of Saint Hubert taking place on its top (the saint, while out hunting, came face to face with a stag that carried a cross between its antlers). Still, since Augustus's appetite for splendor was quite as urgent as his sex drive, these and similar pieces were simply not enough: he, too, had to look as if he came from Dinglinger's workshop.

He succeeded as fully in this as in his ambition to be a king, and the results fill a very large room in the Green Vaults today. There, glittering away, are several complete sets of what the well-jeweled monarch should wear, some made of huge diamonds and others with immense colored stones—rubies, topazes, emeralds—and, of course, pearls as well. There is the best and largest yellow diamond in the world, along with some of the biggest emeralds, all set into sword handles, shoe or hat buckles, pendants, aigrettes, and orders. Among the most spectacular of these is an emblem of the Golden Fleece, the Habsburg's chief decoration, consisting of three huge emeralds set in diamonds hanging one above the other and linked by more diamonds to the Fleece, although it does not outshine the badge of the White Eagle of Poland in which a diamond star ends in emerald bursts with over it all a diamond eagle with a heart made of one huge emerald.

These dazzling sets were worn only on special occasions, a fact Augustus deplored and which he obviated by having the largest stones mounted in removable settings. For everyday wear they could be converted into buttons or simply rows of ornaments, thus providing permanent glitter.

Even if the Green Vaults contained no more than Augustus's commissions, there would be riches enough. But as an extra treat, they also display the collections of earlier electors of Saxony. There is Renaissance jewelry, with its characteristic use of zoomorphic B roque pearls, and a variety of objec like the seventeenth-century rock-cr tal ewer mounted in precious ston The collection of ivory pieces is qu as impressive in a different way, as ar few delicate wooden sculptures. So t reference is to art as well as splend And just around the corner, in one the pavilions of the Zwinger, the pc celain collection shows off the ma tery of Dinglinger's pupils, Joachi Kandler first and foremost.

Add to that one of the very best a museums in Europe and the fact th Count Brühl, who was prime minist in the mid eighteenth century, amasse a collection so distinguished that it w bought by Catherine the Great at h death and forms the core of the He mitage today, and the high degree civilization in Dresden will become a parent. Although sadly fallen from i earlier splendors, the city today is st full of treasures, and when the conten of the Green Vaults are once more di played in their original settings, the fu splendor of Augustus the Strong court will again dazzle the world. □



THE HOUSE OF MONDADORI

(Continued from page 167) Vinc which occupies a whole wall of the din ing room, on the ground floor.

Leonardo's passion for collecting from periods as different as Ferrares painting between 1480 and 1520 an Futurism, comes both from his stud of those periods and from his havin fallen under the spell of certain pic tures or drawings.

"In any case, both periods wer turning points, moments of grea change in Italian painting," Leonard tells me.

In the dining room Verde decided t use raw, natural materials since th room leads to a *jardin d'hiver* verand and then, up two steps, to the garden It had to be both a formal dining roon for a sit-down dinner of twelve and simple, informal room where friend could drink fresh Lambrusco and ea chestnuts and polenta. The floor is ter

ra-cotta waxed and treated with green enamel, and the walls are painted with watercolors in hues of pink and green. The ceiling is framed in a laurel border, and two cherrywood columns, designed by Verde, are the main sources of light.

It's in this room that Leonardo and Katherine might eat alone or, as very often happens, it turns into one of the most interesting salons of Milan, with writers like Giorgio Bassani or politicians like Giovanni Spadolini, art historians and critics Federico Zeri, Pierre Rosenberg, and Pierre Schneider. There might also be E. L. Doctorow and Saul Bellow or Nadine Gordimer. Sometimes it becomes a conference room for editors or consultants—an appendage of the publishing house—or a meeting place for the literary magazine Mondadori distributes, *Nuovi Argomenti,* edited by Alberto Moravia, Leonardo Sciascia, and Enzo Siciliano.

From this room one can walk into the garden, which was designed by another friend, the young landscape architect Marco Mosters. He has succeeded in creating a country feeling that reminds Katherine of her North Carolina childhood. She wanted, for example, a fish pond that, like a running brook, would make a continuous sound. And around the pond are herbs—rosemary, thyme, and basil—as well as gardenia bushes, another reminder of her mother's garden in the South where there is a corner full of enormous gardenia plants. Having a private garden in Milan is a rarity; so is living in a private house rather than an apartment. Leonardo bought the house on impulse, after meeting Katherine. She was in America; he wanted her to join him in Milan. Soon after she arrived, they both fell in love with this four-story house, high and narrow like houses in London or New York.

"Going up and down steps changes your life. Everybody can have privacy. Our bedroom on the fourth floor is a world apart. So is our son's room on the third . . ."

At first the Mondadoris didn't believe they would have a true feeling of home, privacy, isolation. Isolation within limits, of course, because, as I said before, the house is open to a stream of authors, friends, colleagues, painters, and collectors who visit the house as if it were an old family home, with its easy air of simplicity, comfort, and luxury. A sober house with handsome objects and pictures, but at the same time a place where rubber hamburgers are dragged over antique carpets so the dogs can cut their teeth. Francesco's toys lie among the bicycles of Katherine and Leonardo.

The days begin early, with exercises and working breakfast. After Leonardo goes off to the office, Katherine is kept busy organizing house, dogs, child, dinner, or lunch as well as her new "English tearoom." With Aldrovandi, one of the most distinguished booksellers in old Milan, Katherine is trying to open a veranda tearoom adjacent to the bookshop, reminiscent of Shakespeare and Company. She describes it as a "place where people who love books—and even those who don't—can meet and drink tea and eat muffins. They will be able to get together, talk, and browse."

Leonardo is an opera fan, and music can be heard booming throughout the house at top volume at all hours. He is also a sailor. Two young men in Viareggio have just built him a sixty-foot sailboat, which flies the American flag. Katherine has a collection of Art Deco clocks and Neapolitan gouaches, inherited from her grandmother. These have found their place on the top floor, in the bedroom.

But Leonardo tells me that their art collection has overwhelmed all other hobbies, including food. To be sure, you eat well at the Mondadoris', provided that Sole, the Ethiopian cook, is in the right mood and has decided to prepare one of the specialties of the house, cold pasta with fresh mozzarella, tomato, basil, mint, and garlic, instead of one of her fiery Ethiopian dishes.

Finally it could be said that Verde Visconti has conceived for the Mondadoris a place perfectly suited to the various aspects of their life. Now, over the years, they—and the developments in their collections—will make their own changes. □

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